INSTRUCTIONS TO YOUNG FOOTBALLERS

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FOOTBALL ROUND THE WORLD

A picture taken during an England v. Belgium match at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels. Note how I am controlling the ball with my left foot and also keeping my eye on it despite the close attention of a Belgian defender

INSTRUCTIONS TO YOUNG FOOTBALLERS

by

TOM FINNEY

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CHAPTER I

How much do you know about football? We have many fine young players in this country . . . but how should we set about bringing them on to the highest grade? The big boy often shines in the junior grades . . . but it's brains we want, not brawn, if a lad is going to reach the first class standard.

EVERY Saturday of the Soccer season close on a million spectators pour through the turnstiles on our Football League grounds. I suppose if you asked any one of that host of football watchers what he knew about Soccer, he would keep you occupied for the next few hours telling you all he knew about the game.

Well, how much does the average football fan know about the technique and tactics of Association Football?

I would say a lot in general about teams and players, but not enough about the finer points of the game. In saying that, let me emphasise straight away, that if you take the *overall picture* of football in this country we are still the top football nation in the world. Our international team has suffered set-backs, because the continentals have caught us up, and in many cases improved on our methods. But we have saner football fans, better referees, and if you take Soccer from the schoolboy stage to the professional ranks, I would say the average standard of football is higher than in any of the countries I have played and coached in.

We also have more potential great football talent in this country than anywhere else. Many boys who would become real football artists, delighting spectators and

improving the game, prefer a steady job to the precarious living of a professional footballer. Many others fail to live up to their youthful promise.

Where then do we go wrong? I hope in this book to point out a few of the pitfalls facing the young footballer, and also what I as a professional player, think we should do to improve the game as a spectacle.

This book is entitled *Instructions to Young Footballers*. I hope it is going to be of interest to every football lover, whether he still plays the game or not—because I believe the ordinary football fan is a vital part of the game. Football never will improve unless we have well-informed criticism from the terraces.

For instance, are you one of those people who pays his two shillings to go on the Spion Kops of our famous football grounds merely to boo and shout "Get rid of it" . . . "Dirty" . . . "Get stuck in," and all the other epithets which are so frequently directed at players. If you are, then this book is directed to you as well as the young players trying to improve their game.

You see, one of the biggest problems that has been facing our footballers for the last few years is that the player who tries to hold the ball and use it to advantage is too often the target of vindictive criticism. He loses his confidence, and his game suffers. In the case of the very young and inexperienced player, his confidence is gone before he has chance to build his game on solid foundations.

It may well be that the youngster is being rushed to the front too quickly. Too many boys who make a name in schoolboy football get picked for the town team simply because they happen to be big lads. They get through by sheer weight, leaving the crafts of the game behind them. They crash in goals or belt the ball in long clearances. Very often these tactics can bring success in the junior grades where youngsters can so

easily be bumped off the ball. Young defenders don't know how to defend in depth; their positional play and the way they cover one another is all wrong . . . and because of this the big chap looks a good player. He moves on to higher grades . . . ah! now he is in trouble! Why?

Because he is not a master of the ball. His strength is of no avail against the class player, simply because he can't control the ball, and against a quick mover and a quick thinker he looks hapless if not hopeless.

Football is to me a glorious spectacle when you get eleven craftsmen playing the game. Soccer, even in this twentieth century, is not a machine game. I hope we shall never live to see the game played entirely by a system of numbers, so eliminating all artistry.

There are times when football must be a duel of man against man, to try and create openings. It is in situations like this that we see beautiful movers with the ball like Stan Matthews, Jimmy Hagan, Ernie Taylor and Len Shackleton, shining in all their glorious poetry of movement. They are Masters of the Ball.

They can bring a ball down from any angle, and at any speed in a split second. Once they do that, it is *their ball* . . . he is a good man who can take it from them.

That is the standard all young footballers should aim for . . . but before they can master the ball there comes the essential business of getting physically fit.

CHAPTER II

Before you can play football you must be fit. The importance of the lungs, legs, head and heart. A few tips on how to keep yourself in trim.

ASK a boy in his teens if he is fit and you will probably be met with a blank stare. Quite rightly so. Most boys are naturally fit in their teens because they do so much running, or cycling, or play some form of sport.

They get fit while they play. In my own case I used to dribble a block of wood to school, dodging lamp posts and the other people on the way. I don't recommend that now—because I must have been a danger on the roads!—but that is how I made myself fit, and I think perhaps just wrestling, running, skipping and jumping about with the non-stop exuberance of boyhood is enough for most lads. They can run all day if you let them.

What the school coach, and later the boy himself, must do is harness all this boundless energy to improve his game of football.

Soccer depends, I believe, on the two Ls . . . Lungs and Legs . . . and the two Hs . . . Heart and Head. Get these in working order and our footballer should have no worries about lasting the pace of any game.

In his schooldays, of course, the junior footballer usually has every facility. He can use the gym., or if there isn't one available the school sports-master will keep the lads fit by exercises. But what about the young player when he leaves school? Some start to smoke,

keep later hours, and football for them becomes hard work. Too many of our potentially great players are lost to the game this way. Remember that there is a lot a boy can do until he is spotted by a League club or joins one of the many intermediate teams. The model of physical fitness for any young player is Stan Matthews, who is still going strong although he is over forty.

I think one of the great reasons is because Stan, at an early age, took deep breathing exercises before an open window with his brothers and father, who was, incidentally, a famous fly-weight boxer. From his very earliest years Stan has religiously carried out this formula . . . breathing deep, exhaling, building up his terrific lung power, and it is this which is standing him in such good stead now.

What is to stop any boy doing the same in his own bedroom for a few minutes when he gets up?

Here's a little drill any young footballer might copy. If he usually gets up at seven-thirty, try getting up fifteen minutes earlier and follow these exercises.

1. Open the window . . . not too much at first until you get used to it. Now breathe in, rising on the toes and raising the hands over the head reaching for the sky. . . .

2. Now exhale, going down slowly off the toes and bringing the arms down in relaxed movement.

Do this twelve times every morning and you'll soon feel alert and lively.

Now try trunk-rotating. Hands looped, sweep over the head and down, touching the floor. This loosens up the back and shoulder muscles. Breathe in as you reach up . . . and breathe out as your hands come down to touch the floor.

Now try arms swinging vigorously, touching the left toe (don't bend the knees now!) with the right hand, and the right toe with the left hand.

Down on the floor now on an old blanket. Bring your

legs over, touching the floor behind your head without bending the knee. Then swing the legs back, keeping the knees straight out and touch your toes while in the sitting position.

You'll find this extremely difficult at first, but persevere until you can do it twelve times without effort. The essential point in these exercises is that you should be breathing deeply when your chest is thrust out and breathing out as your body relaxes.

There's nothing very difficult in these exercises is there? You probably did most of them at school, so why not keep it up as daily morning routine?

You can vary these with cycling exercises, lying on the floor with the legs in the air.

The aim of all these exercises in the home is to keep the body loose and relaxed . . . and when the really strenuous work comes, the body is ready for action and you will not pull your muscles so easily.

A lot has been written about the British way of preparing for a soccer season by lap, lap, lapping around the track. Well, I honestly do not think there is any substitute for this type of hard work, designed to build up stamina.

Where I do think we go wrong is that there is not enough variety in training. Lapping is the way to build up leg muscles for the hard strain of nine months soccer . . . but I think that in the next few years we will have to adopt some of the Continental ideas and bring a lot more athletic work—such as long-jumping and high-jumping, discus-throwing, and things like that—into our soccer preparations. After all, football is an athletic game, so we should be really athletic to play it.

The youngster, however, tends to begin his pre-season preparations in a too violent manner. He gets hold of a football, takes it out on the pitch and for the next few days tries to kick the ball out of sight.

Don't . . . please don't do anything so silly. The way to start a soccer season is by going for long walks in the country, breathing in the fresh air—and I do mean breathe in the air. In through the nose, out through the mouth . . . and make that walk a really vital part of your training.

After the walks, comes the running. Again, don't overdo it. Don't go racing madly round the track. Take a nice easy jog trot for a lap, then walk a lap. Run a lap—walk a lap. And don't carry on until you feel about to drop!

CHAPTER III

You must first learn to kick correctly. For instance, can you drive a ball accurately with the instep . . . pass it with the inside of the foot . . . use the chip shot over the heads of defenders . . . and place a corner accurately? Here are a few tips on how the professionals do it.

THE game is *football,* yet how many players really kick the ball correctly? Now don't laugh at that because there are quite a number of professional footballers, I am sorry to say, who have not completely mastered all the various styles of kicking.

A young lad almost invariably begins to play Soccer by toe-ending the ball. He often finds he gets a lot more power this way . . . but the plain truth is you cannot kick a ball accurately in this manner.

The best way of kicking a ball hard and accurately is with the instep. The best way to learn is by taking a ball out, dropping it, and hitting it on the volley—a drop kick we call it. If you analyse the motions you will almost certainly find that you are kicking with the toes well down, and the knee of the kicking foot is right over the ball. This is the true kicking action.

Now in practice I know that all boys like to get out with the ball, kicking it around, playing shooting in and things like that. I don't blame them, but you'll enjoy your football much better later on if you can kick correctly. I would advise two boys to go out with a ball. For ten minutes one should act as coach, rolling the ball

A race for the ball with Wally Barnes (Arsenal's left back) and Leslie Compton (who was Arsenal's centre half) during a match between Preston and Arsenal. Speed off the mark is essential at such times

The only way to win is to get there first. On this occasion a Liverpool defender beat me to it

Another picture taken during the same Preston v. Liverpool match. This time I did not wait to be tackled, and their full back only just missed my bullet-fast centre

to his pal and letting him kick it. You don't want to kick it out of sight—just hit it gently back.

There might not seem much to this game but you can make it very entertaining by rolling the ball directly to a player at first, then roll it in front of him so that he can shoot on the run.

Now stand at right angles and bounce the ball so that the kicker has to get his leg up and hit it on the half turn from an uncomfortable height. This is grand practice for the budding centre-forward, who might be called on at any time in a game to have a drive at goal from a half chance like this.

In time, kicking accurately becomes automatic. But if you analyse each movement the correct position is for the knee of the kicking leg to be directly over the ball when contact is made; the arms will be flung out to maintain this one-footed balance; and the kicking legs follows straight through the ball. Please! don't lift your head up. Never forget the eyes should be firmly fixed on that ball until it is on its way.

I hope I am not boring you with this technical talk on kicking because most boys automatically assume that *they* don't need to be taught how to kick. Unfortunately many of them do.

And don't forget in this kicking practice, do use both feet. Don't keep hitting the ball with your right foot just because you are a natural right footer. If that's the case, there's nothing better than wearing a tennis shoe on your favourite foot and a boot on the other.

However, in the early stages it is better to practise with pumps on both feet. This forces a chap to get his toes down and really drive the ball with the instep. If he tried to use his toes he would soon find how painful it is.

Before I leave this topic of kicking with the instep I must emphasise that at first you must just roll the ball.

Once you have got the correct kicking action you will find increased power follows automatically. And do practise hitting the ball from all angles and from varying heights. After all, in match play what is nicer than to see a centre-forward racing through on to a low cross about two feet off the ground and cracking it into the net hard and low.

Forwards in shooting position have to be right over the ball to keep it down, but defenders lie back slightly more to give length to their kick. They have a longer follow through with the leg swinging fully from the hips.

The instep kick must be used for driving long forty to fifty yard passes. Now what about the short pass? Ah, that's where we use the pass with the inside of the foot.

This is the easiest method of all and the one used particularly by half-backs rolling the ball accurately to the winger or inside man. The reason for such accuracy is obvious, because the whole area from heel to toe comes into contact with the ball. The inside of the foot must be turned in the direction of the intended pass or shot.

Did I say shot? Well you know many goals are missed by players trying to drive the ball into the net when in fact a short push with the inside of the foot would be much more sensible. It is impossible to generalise on this matter, but often in a crowded goal-mouth it would be fatal to try a drive when a short push into a narrow gap would do the trick.

Some players, owing to the shape of their legs, tend to hit a ball either off the *outside of the foot;* or else the *inside of the toes.* This method of kicking imparts spin to the ball and therefore makes it difficult to control for passing purposes. There are, however, times when an inside forward brings the ball up, feints to come

inside, and then when he has a defender leaning with him and off balance pushes the ball with the *outside of of his foot* to the winger. This type of pass is not used a great deal, but it is as well to master it.

The chipped shot is a feature of most class players. In this the foot is used in the same way that a golf club is used in making an " explosion " shot. You generally find this type of shot is used to clear a packed defence from a free-kick just outside the penalty area. The player chops the inside of his foot under the ball, which rises quickly and plops down over the heads of the defenders. It requires great skill and constant practice to master the chipped shot.

In taking corners the ball must be literally spooned into the goalmouth. Here again constant practice makes for perfection ; and all wingers should reserve about ten minutes of their training time for the purpose of taking corners.

The aim should be for the non-kicking foot to come down in line with the ball. The arms are flung wide to maintain the player's balance and the kicking foot swings back and then *under the ball* with a long follow through.

Here again in kicking don't take your eye off the ball to look at the goalmouth. The lay-out of the players should be firmly fixed in your mind when you run up to take the kick. You should know just where you want to place the ball. From then on it's head down and eyes on the ball until you've kicked it.

Defenders of course have to be able to hook the ball on the half-turn, and also use the overhead kick. These are, in my opinion, kicks which are used as a last resort to save a serious situation. Obviously you cannot place an overhead kick with any degree of accuracy.

Continental players frequently use a scissors kick to clear their goalmouth ; whereas in a similar situation a

British player would be quite happy to push the ball the way he is facing for a corner.

These " fancy " kicks require a great deal of athletic prowess. They are most useful on nice firm grounds; but I do not think they are really successful on muddy pitches in midwinter over here, where the ball so easily skids off to an opponent.

I don't want to leave this subject of kicking without once more emphasising that the game is football; and that means so far as possible the ball should be kept down. Therefore if you can become really proficient with the instep kick, and the pass with the inside of the foot, you won't go far wrong.

CHAPTER IV

After the footwork comes headwork. Defenders, particularly the centre-half, must be master of heading. Don't just let the ball hit your head . . . the aim is to meet the ball with the bony part of the forehead . . . And why not take up basketball as John Charles did to improve his timing and jumping ability?

I'VE just said that the game is football . . . but that does not mean to say a player should not be a good header of the ball. A centre-half, particularly, should be good in the air; and the full-backs should not be so far behind him in this respect.

From a defender's point of view he is almost always in the happy position of facing the ball when he is heading. This is one of the chief reasons why centre-forwards, however good they might be in the air, rarely beat the centre-half for the high balls.

How do you become proficient at heading? In the case of Nat Lofthouse he learned how to head by nodding a small rubber ball against a wall and seeing how long he could keep it up.

Despite all our modern coaching methods this is still as good as any for the young boy. It requires great skill to place a small ball accurately, because obviously you have a much bigger area to utilise when you come on to the full size football.

The secret of good heading is that indefinable something we call timing. The secret is in timing the jump so well that you are coming down on the ball while the other fellow is still going up for it.

Centre-forwards particularly do well to hang back a

little in waiting for a centre or corner to come over. This gives them a chance for a run at the ball, which allows added impetus for the leap. In heading, never let the ball land on the top or back of the head otherwise you'll be coming round a few moments later with the trainer douching you with cold water while you ask rather vaguely: "What happened?"

The ball should be headed by the top bony part of the forehead. A last split second jerk of the neck muscles lends power to the header. That's timing, of course.

As a winger I like to come running in for my headers, so that I can take the full-back by surprise.

Football fans and sports writers have a habit of saying that: "The ball was planted on the centre-forward's head with a made-to-measure centre."

This is rarely true. The winger who centres aims for an open space (or he should do) and it is the skill of the man moving into position for the header who really makes the chance.

Perhaps the best all-round header of a ball in this country is John Charles. He starts with the distinct advantage of being over six feet tall, but unlike many big men he does really get up to the ball. He doesn't just let it hit his towering head.

I understand that John improved his heading ability by playing a lot of basket ball, a game in which you have to leap high to get the ball. I pass on that hint to all young footballers because a lot more British teams are playing games like basketball and baseball to sharpen them up and improve their ball sense.

Another grand device for head training is to have a few old footballs hung at varying heights round the ground. As the players run round the track they can leap to head the ball as they pass . . . and of course as they are spaced at varying heights it means the player has to vary his leaps accordingly.

Then we have the old and tried game of head tennis in which four players (two each side) head the ball from one to the other over the net, a point being scored against the side which allows the ball to touch the ground.

All of these games are designed to improve heading but in the long run it is up to the player himself whether or not he will become an expert header. He must have his eyes on the ball all the time; and not allow his attention to wander to an opponent who is challenging. This is one of the surest ways of getting hurt.

And defenders: don't fall into the bad habit of merely heading the ball anywhere and anyhow. Do try to place your headers to a team mate. I know it is often difficult for a centre-half under pressure to head anywhere but into touch . . . but if he can just gently nod the ball down to a team mate then he should do so. There has been many a goal scoring move started in this way.

CHAPTER V

How to develop ball control. First you must be able to trap with the inside, outside and sole of the foot. Then master the mid-air trap and the continental way of "killing" a ball in mid-air with the knee.

THE trouble I suppose with most young footballers is that they want to run before they can walk. It's only natural really. After all soccer is a game to be enjoyed, and there will always be boys who love to kick the ball and chase after it. In scratch football games on the local park the chief method of beating a man is by kicking the ball past him and running for it.

They keep fit when they do that, so who am I to quibble? But this is no good to the lad who has football talent and wants to develop it, for the basis of all good football is ball control.

The ability to control a ball is, with some, an inborn talent; a knack of timing the ball which is almost a reflex action. Yet to be truly a master of the ball, takes years and years of hard and unremitting practice.

I suppose most of the great players learned it by the old-fashioned method of playing with a small ball in a confined space. It has been said that Stan Matthews developed his uncanny ball control by dribbling his "tanner" ball in a crowded Hanley school playground.

Jimmy Hagan, another brilliant master of the ball, learned his skill tapping the ball against the side of an old wall then trapping it as it came off at all sorts of angles. Don Revie learned the same way in the back street near his Middlesbrough home.

In these times, a much more determined effort has been made to coach the young . . . but the basic principles are still the same.

The first step in ball control is to learn to trap. There are three chief methods of killing the ball in this way.

THE STRAIGHT TRAP: Most boys begin by trapping in this manner. As the ball drops it is stopped dead with the sole of the foot which is inclined at an angle against the ball. A lot of young players try to stand on the ball, and in so doing often allow the ball to bounce under the outstretched foot. The way to master this fault is by throwing the ball up in the air and trapping it yourself. As time goes on get a friend to toss the ball direct to you and try to stop it dead. Yes, I know you would much rather be practising shooting in or something more spectacular, but trapping is one of the basic skills which must be mastered at an early age.

In match play the direct trap is used mostly by wing-halves and inside forwards from a long clearance. It is a trap best used when you have time really to stop the ball before moving off with it. But do keep at it until you can stop the ball and prevent it rebounding to an opponent.

THE TRAP WITH THE INSIDE OF THE FOOT: This is perhaps the most widely used in match play, particularly by wingers and inside forwards who not only want to bring the ball down quickly but also want to move off with it before they can be tackled. The technique is the same as with the ordinary trap, except that the ball is cushioned by the inside of the foot. The eyes have to be firmly focused on the ball as it drops; the knee should be right over the ball as it hits the turf; and the foot is in the same position as for giving the pass with the inside of the foot except that the foot is withdrawn *backwards* as the ball comes down so that it can be cushioned to the turf.

It is only constant practice which helps anyone to be able to trap. The chief virtue of trapping with the inside of the foot is of course that the player is ready for immediate action. He can do any number of things, feint to go one way and drag the ball the other; move straight forward with it; turn round with it; move sideways . . . simply because in this method as soon as the ball is brought down the player is ready to set off in a dribble.

THE TRAP WITH THE OUTSIDE OF THE FOOT: This is just the same except that the outside of the foot pins the ball against the turf. It all depends on how the ball comes to you whether you trap with the inside or outside of the foot. As a winger I find the trap with the outside of the foot has its limitations. For instance if I "kill" it this way with my left foot I have to turn and almost inevitably I am running straight into the full back. This problem does not affect inside forwards so much because they are rarely hemmed in by the touchline. They are nearly always in a position to turn any way they like.

However, all young players should master these three methods of trapping first of all. The golden rule is to keep your eyes on the ball and not on an opponent and to bring the ball down under control. It is advisable to use pumps for this job. You get the feel of the ball more. So do not forget next time you go out with the ball spend a few minutes tossing it to one another and try trapping it and moving off without checking your running action.

One of the main faults of a junior player, is that once he can trap a ball in the orthodox manner he thinks he has finished. But what about the ball coming chest high or knee high? What should he do then? If it comes knee high don't just take a lunge at the ball and try to volley it. You can still trap it you know in this way.

THE MID-AIR TRAP: As the ball comes at an awkward height put your leg out and coax the ball down. How is it done? Some chaps literally catch the ball on the instep and *caress* it down to the turf. Others get the foot more on top of the ball and *stroke* it down.

Make a note of those two words caress and stroke. It is timing which does the trick, and timing again only comes from constant practice. What sort of practice?

At first get one of the other players to stand about six to eight yards away and ask him to toss the ball up in the air. A nice slow one so that you can watch it all the way, then put your foot out and as the ball makes contact relax the foot muscles and try to keep the ball on the instep as it falls down. You will have plenty of failures at first, as the ball bounces annoyingly into the air again because most players hold their foot too rigid at first. Then there will arrive the moment when you find the ball comes obediently to rest. Keep at it all the time. First with the right foot, then with the left, gradually getting your helper to put more pace on the ball as he tosses it in the air.

Later on you can get him to throw it to you from a sideways-on position. Now the ball has to be coaxed down with the side of the foot so that it comes to rest between both feet rather like the position for the pass with the inside of the foot.

All right you say, but what if the ball dips suddenly and I'm right under it as it falls knee high—what then? Well, here's where we can take a lesson from the continentals. They can trap a ball with the knee and upper part of the thigh. As the ball drops the knee is bent at right angles to the thigh and the ball is caught on the upper part of the thigh. As the ball touches the leg, the thigh is drawn back in a recoil action, and once more the ball can be brought to rest at the feet.

A player can master this manœuvre on his own by

throwing the ball up into the air and then catching it on his thigh. You might be wondering how many times in match play a footballer is called on to trap a ball in this manner. The answer is: not very often. But it all serves to improve a player's timing and feel of the ball and helps to make a chap a true master of the game.

Now then, the ball is coming towards your face. You cannot bring this one down with the mid-air trap because it is too high. What do we do? Run forward and try to head it—or retreat a few yards and kick it? The answer is that you should try to chest it down to your feet if you have time.

All right, you will need that helper again to start tossing the ball to you. Throw it slowly into the air at first; now hunch your shoulders over the ball and try to cushion it down your chest.

Hard luck! That ball has bounced away like a live thing, hasn't it? Never mind, we've all gone through this stage. Let's try again. Up with the ball, watch it carefully, now it's dropping on to your chest, pull your chest in slightly, hunch your shoulders and let the ball trickle down your body. Keep at it despite the fact that weeks and months of hard work lie ahead until you can do it. Remember that you've got to do it if you want to be a master of the ball.

I do not propose to go into any more details on how to trap and control the ball here beyond saying that you can in time trap the ball with almost any part of the body—shoulders as well! That elusive thing we call timing is the secret of it all and don't think I'm labouring the point when I emphasise once again that timing can only come with constant practice. Yes, I know it's hard work; but it will make your soccer easier later on. And more enjoyable, too!

CHAPTER VI

This is how you learn to dribble, but you must walk with the ball before you run with it. Later you can start dribbling the ball between sticks. A few hints on how to develop a body swerve, and pointers on how some of the famous players feint to go one way then take the ball in an entirely different direction.

A SCHOOLBOY'S idea of dribbling is to flick the ball from foot to foot like a shuttlecock. Well, it's jolly good practice. Keep at it if you like, but remember most players—great players I mean—can work the ball with one foot; or the inside and outside of both feet.

In my schooldays, Alex James was my idol, and, as I have already said, I used to run to school dribbling a block of wood in and out of lamp posts; past people walking along the pavement; round corners; and any object which happened to be in the way. In my mind's eye I was Alex James, listening to the roar of the crowd as I dribbled through a packed defence.

Now I know a much safer method. All you need is a ball, a lot of patience, and a stretch of ground. Put the ball down and walk with it. I said walk, not run! That's the trouble with too many players. They try to run too fast with the ball when it is really much more important to control it properly at first. Speed will come later.

As you walk with the ball between the feet you will notice it rolls automatically from one foot to the other. You hardly need to touch it. And don't forget the body should be right over the ball. No one can dribble if they are leaning back.

This simple exercise is the basis of learning how to dribble. It might seem tame to just walk with the ball. You can soon start to walk at a brisk pace, however, then break into a trot. That's when you'll find the ball starts to run away from you.

So back you go walking with the ball; now a bit quicker; now faster still; now a nice steady run. The ball should be passing from toe to toe quite naturally.

There always seems a doubt in the minds of boys as to whether they should use the inside or the outside of the foot for dribbling. Don't worry, nature and the construction of a boy's foot will soon determine that. As a general rule the *inside of the feet* are used for working the ball and the *outside of the foot* is used to push the ball quickly for a sudden dart after the player has feinted to go the other way.

For instance, I usually bring the ball up to a full back with the *inside of my left foot*. Sometimes I sway as though I am going down the touchline. In this way I hope I can put the full back off balance. If I succeed, I can now bring my left foot over the ball, push it inside the back with the *outside of my left foot,* and I'm then in position to cut in for goal.

I'd better pause for a moment while you get your breath back and study that preceding paragraph again to see if you have understood what I am driving at.

Now then back to the dribbling exercise. This is still part of my own training at Deepdale. Very often when I am lapping I take a ball with me and run with it in this manner, finishing with a quick burst of speed with the ball at my feet. Then I leave it on the side of the field, carry on running until I come round again, then have a thirty yard dribble and so on until I have finished lapping.

The young footballer is ready to move on to more advanced training once he can run at a fair speed with

the ball without it bouncing more than twelve inches in front of him. The next step is to beg or borrow about eight sticks—the canes which father uses for his tomatoes will do if he will let you have them! Stick them in the ground about six feet apart and go right through that dribbling exercise again.

Come back, now! Remember you have to walk before you can run with the ball. Now walk between the sticks weaving in and out. Quicken it up until you can run through them at speed . . . but please sacrifice a little speed if you are going to lose control of the ball.

Now we are really getting on. You can then try to work the ball with the outside as well as the inside of the feet; stopping, twisting and turning, just as you would have to do if those sticks were opponents in a real match.

This exercise with the sticks is the way for a boy to develop a body swerve. He must as time goes on learn to lean and sway from the hips as he dribbles the ball in and out of the sticks.

Body swerves and feints in football are to a large extent an automatic reaction by a player. Quick thinking, perfect balance, and body control are the chief essentials.

I have already pointed out that by dribbling in and out of sticks a player must lean inwards and outwards to enable him to turn quickly.

The next trick is for him to lean one way, as though continuing his dribble in an orthodox manner, and then suddenly to change direction. How often do you see in top class football a man beating another without touching the ball. In most cases he has sent his opponent the wrong way by his body swerve.

Probably the greatest exponent of all time is Stan Matthews. For years full backs have tried to solve the riddle of Matthews yet they are still helpless. Why?

Stan's body swerve and sudden acceleration from a standing position is just incredible.

It is quite impossible to lay down hard and fast rules because so many players differ in their methods. In my own case I have already pointed out that I usually bring the ball as close as possible to the full back with the inside of my left foot. If I lean outwards to my right, the full back may instinctively follow my move and get off balance, I can then whip my left foot over the top of the ball and push it to one side of the back with the outside of my left foot. I am now coming inside him; he has thrown all his weight on his left foot and I have a split second to get past him before he can recover.

If I find I cannot get past him with this trick I can then try swaying inwards to my left, as though I am going to take the ball in straight for goal. If the full back follows me, I bring the outside of my right foot over the top of the ball, push it past the back and I am immediately in my stride to go outside him down the touchline as he is caught off balance.

Have you got it? If you lean to the left and the opponent goes with you, take the ball the other way with the outside of the right foot. If you lean to the right and your opponent follows, take the ball in the opposite direction with the outside of the left foot. Other players have different methods and achieve the same object, which is to move your body in one direction by swaying from the hips, and then taking the ball in the opposite direction while your opponent is off balance.

Another good trick, particularly for a forward in front of goal, is the double body swerve. Suppose a forward is making a run for goal and he is blocked by the defence. He sways to the right, then the left, doesn't touch the ball at all and just goes straight through with it. Sounds easy, doesn't it? But there are very few

CENTRING ON THE RUN

Here's a different one, where the foot is used to scoop the ball into the goalmouth. This is the centre all wingers have to practice and practice until they are foot perfect. Once more the body is leaning slightly back; eyes glued on the ball; arms flung out to keep the player perfectly poised. Then the instep of the kicking foot is brought right under the ball, the player pivots and that's another centre on the way. Get a colleague to keep rolling the ball in front of you during training periods then practise hitting that ball into the goalmouth in this manner

Heading for goal during a game in my early days for Preston. Note how everyone has his eyes on the ball

Scoring against Scotland at Wembley. England lost 3-2

players who can do it; and precious few defences who fall for it. Chaps like Ray Westwood, the famous pre-war Bolton Wanderers' player, and David Jack of Arsenal, were very good at this. Those who saw the 1955 Cup Final will no doubt remember that wee Bobby Johnstone, the Manchester City and Scotland inside forward, beat several opponents with his body swerve.

From swerves to feints . . . and there are any number of feints on a football field.

One of the best and most unselfish is the one where a player runs at top speed for the ball and then opens his legs and lets it run through to a team mate in a better position than himself. This is thinking for the team and not for yourself.

Another, is the foot over the ball flutter, which I first saw from Alex James. These days one of the best exponents of this dodge is Jimmy Hagan.

Jimmy saw Alex James do this trick years and years ago and never rested until he too had mastered it. This is how it is done. Suppose Hagan is being hotly pursued. As the opponent draws almost level with him, Jimmy will drop his foot as though he is about to pass the ball; then at the last moment he brings the same foot over the top of the ball in flutter while it is still running. The effect is for the challenger to check his stride thinking he is going to overrun Hagan . . . alas he realises too late that Jimmy hasn't stopped at all.

Hagan then brings his foot back over the ball and continues with his dribble. There are all sorts of variations of this move. Remember, it is a sleight of foot movement over the top of the ball which causes the opponent to mistime his tackle.

Yet another superb feint was performed by Puskas of Hungary, at Wembley, in that wonder match of 1953. For those who did not see the incident, this is what happened. Puskas, the Hungarian inside-left, was in an

inside-right position at a fairly oblique angle to the English goal. He was blocked by an England player, who rushed in to tackle. As he did so Puskas dropped his right foot as though he was going to take a blind shot at goal. At the last moment he put his left foot *on top of the ball,* pulled it back a few inches, away from the England player's foot, then pushed it quickly to one side on to his left foot, moved on and slammed the ball in for a goal. By quick thinking and a quick feint he had created an opening which did not seem possible.

All these tricks and dodges with the ball—the sudden stops and accelerations—can only be perfected by the player himself as he weaves in and out of those dribbling sticks. There is no easy road to success. It is sheer hard work in training before a player brings off these tricks automatically in match play without consciously thinking of them.

CHAPTER VII

There's no use being a brilliant ball manipulator if you don't subordinate your tricks to the needs of the side. Remember soccer is not a solo act . . . it is a team game.

WE have so far covered shooting, heading, dribbling and trapping. These you might say are the basic principles of soccer.

I am a firm believer in a youngster evolving his own style of play and his own tricks. All that any coach can do is lay down certain general points and after that it is up to the player to practise and really get down to the job.

It is no use mastering a lot of tricks if they are just tricks, like a ball juggler on the stage, without any reference to team play. Remember always that there are eleven players in a football team. It doesn't matter how they are positioned, it is still eleven men against eleven men trying to organise and repel goal scoring moves.

It is no earthly use if the inside forward starts a brilliant dribble in his own half and then runs the ball dead or kicks it out of play with a careless pass. Far better that he should beat a man with a thoughtful pass to a team mate than dribble for dribbling's sake.

A useful basis for building a team is to have a dominating figure in defence and another dominating figure in attack. The one by his experience, confidence and sound positional play marshals the defence; the other by his craft and experience is the general or schemer in the attack.

Now don't go away thinking that all you have to do is find two good players and the rest of the team can take care of itself. You want eleven good players if you can get them. The only point I am making is that it is a great asset to have two generals—one for attack and one for defence.

For instance, Joe Mercer marshalled Arsenal's defence in the years just after the war. Joe dominated the team and dictated the tactics; and in the forward line he had a brilliant schemer, Jimmie Logie, to see those plans were carried out.

In the famous Manchester United side which won the Cup in 1948, Johnny Carey was the skipper and general in defence; Stan Pearson was the man who set the attack in motion.

Every team has its inspirer of attacks. Usually it is an inside forward although not necessarily so. As examples, Stan Matthews is a right winger . . . but look at the goals he makes. Don Revie, of Manchester City fame, has had the No. 9 shirt of a centre-forward put on his back . . . yet he is the man who sets Manchester City's forwards in motion. Ocwirk of Austria is a centre-half . . . yet he is the schemer of the side.

Therefore it is quite obvious that in whatever grade of football you play you must have at least one man who is such a good ball player that his job it to hold and control the ball and build up attacks.

There is, of course, more team play than just that. There should be such a close liaison between defence and attack that the whole team moves up and down field in unison.

Try to remember that as soon as your goalkeeper has made a save and got the ball your team are on the attack . . . even if your goalkeeper is on his own goal-line with the ball. And never forget that when the other side has the ball you are on the defence. That means the

forwards have a defensive job to do. They must not stand still and wait for the ball to be brought up to them.

They should challenge for the ball and get into position ready for a quick breakaway. The days when a winger could stand on the half-way line while his defence were struggling have gone. He must go deep into his own half ready to link up with the defence. However, let us now study this problem position by position, and if I can I will pass on a few hints about what is expected of each player from the goalkeeper to the left winger.

CHAPTER VIII

Personality counts in a goalkeeper—Making use of the ball—Anticipation and positioning—Narrowing an angle—Understanding with his co-defenders.

A GOALKEEPER'S life is all ups and downs. He is not only called upon to leap high, low and sideways . . . but he is either the hero of the hour or the man who let the side down.

A player may make a mistake which leads directly to a goal against his side. In the ebb and flow of the game his mistake often passes unnoticed by most of the spectators.

Yet the man in goal can be dealing with all sorts of shots and headers quite competently, then fumble one difficult shot. Now listen to the torrent of abuse particularly if the ball ends in the net.

"Butter fingers." . . . "Why didn't you get hold of that?" . . . "What a goalkeeper!" These are the sorts of things hurled at the poor unfortunate goalkeeper then!

It is important for the young goalkeeper to bear this point in mind. He must not only have a safe pair of hands; be a good judge of angles; a bounding acrobat; and have a calm sense of anticipation . . . but he needs above all to have the hide of a rhinoceros to stand up to the jibes which will almost certainly be flung at him by some of the spectators behind his goal.

His mistakes always look much worse than those of a wing-half who mis-times his tackle outside the penalty area. The mistimed tackle may not cause immediate

danger . . . but when the goalkeeper drops the ball then it's usually TROUBLE.

It is because he is the LAST LINE OF DEFENCE that a goalkeeper needs a strong individual personality. If you consider the great goalkeepers of our time like Frank Swift, Bert Trautmann, Ted Ditchburn, Bert Williams, Gil Merrick and Ted Burgin, you will find that most of them *are* personalities.

In Frank Swift's case, he was a first rate humorist off the field as well as on it. For there is not the slightest doubt that a keen sense of humour can save a goalkeeper a lot of worry. After all, he is the nearest to the crowd . . . and a crowd right behind the goal—like the one at Spion Kop at Anfield—is enough to frighten anybody . . . unless he makes them laugh with him.

As soon as a goalkeeper shows he is bothered by the crowd, you can be sure certain characters will do their best to upset him still further.

One of the best laughs I ever had was when a goalkeeper unfortunately dropped a high curling centre and it fell into the net. Naturally he was annoyed with himself, but when one sarcastic character shouted: " Garn, fancy dropping that." The goalkeeper turned a dead pan face and remarked: " Well it didn't drop far did it."

From then on the crowd were with him.

In modern football, the goalkeeper is no longer expected to play a purely defensive role. Indeed, Frank Swift has said that stopping shots can be the easiest part of the job. It's the trick of cutting out the centres, and knowing how to use the ball when he has it, which sets a good goalkeeper apart from the rest.

I remember as a youngster that a goalkeeper used to think it quite the proper thing to do to pace up and down the goal-line like an amiable ape, methodically

kicking each goalpost as he passed from one to the other.

Those days are gone for ever. A goalkeeper these days must also know how to use the ball constructively to initiate attacks. Once he has made a save he should not kick the ball out of play or aimlessly downfield. He should be thinking: *"Now how can I use this ball to the best advantage of my side."*

However, before he can do that he must get the ball. And obviously the first essential is to have a safe pair of hands. There are times when you must punch the ball away from the danger area, but if you have the time and you are not in any danger of being bumped, then catch it.

The golden rule is to get your body behind the ball so that you can clutch it safely to your chest. If it is a high ball then pull it to you.

Obviously there are many, many times when this is quite impossible. For instance, a terrific drive just inside the post can often be only stopped by a flying dive and the goalkeeper will do well to finger tip the ball to safety.

Nevertheless, when you watch the great goalkeepers in action you will notice that they do try to do the job with the minimum fuss and bother. There is no earthly use flinging yourself in acrobatic leaps about the goal area, if you can stop the shot by applying a little anticipation.

ANTICIPATION AND POSITIONING are the two musts for any goalkeeper who aspires to make a name in the game.

In his schooldays the long lanky chap is often put into goal simply because he can reach the high shots better than the little fellow. In this class of football, the goalkeeper rarely moves off his goal-line.

In first class soccer of course, every ball inside the

six-yards line is the goalkeeper's. It is no use the goalkeeper trying to evade his responsibility, because managers are constantly instilling into him: EVERY BALL INSIDE THE SIX-YARDS BOX SHOULD BE YOURS.

It is when he moves up into the higher grades of football that the young goalkeeper faces a lot of problems. His saves previously were no doubt of the do-or-die character, with aerial leaps across his goal line. Now he must learn to master angles. For example, a forward racing through the middle on his own should score easily unless the goalkeeper moves out to meet him, thus narrowing the angle.

Obviously if the goalkeeper stands on his line, then the forward has a wide area of goal to aim at. If the goalkeeper runs out he is reducing the area of goal the forward has to shoot at.

Again, the winger cutting in will have an easy shot at goal if the goalkeeper stands meekly in the middle of his goal. The obvious move is to advance a few yards and narrow the angle.

In some cases the goalkeeper has an automatic ability which enables him to sense just where he should stand to narrow the angle, but in most cases it a question of trial and error . . . plus an immense amount of hard work in training.

When I first went to Deepdale, Mr. Will Scott, then the Preston manager, used to spend hours with our goalkeepers Harry Holdcroft and Jack Fairbrother. Mr. Scott would tell a winger to come running in from the touchline with the ball at his feet and shoot for goal. He would then put a peg at the point where the shot was taken; then with a piece of string or cord, he would join up the peg to each goalpost thus indicating the angle.

It was then possible for the goalkeeper to advance into a place where they could touch the cord at arms

length. Obviously this was the place to stand when a winger was coming in to shoot from this *particular angle.*

This process was repeated for the right wing and left wing as well as angles from the inside-right and inside-left positions.

In this manner it is possible to give a goalkeeper a sound idea as to just where he should position himself for the various shots. Naturally in match play the whole process is speeded up. After all, the winger is travelling at speed and the goalkeeper has to try and anticipate just where he will shoot from and get into position as quickly as he can.

This method of pegging out is one I do recommend for the training of goalkeepers. Place the pegs at ten yards range; then fifteen yards, even twenty yards if you like—although it is very rarely anyone scores with an angled-drive from this range against a first-class goalkeeper.

The object of this method of coaching is to give the young goalkeeper a better idea of how to angle the ball. After that he is on his own.

It is no use knowing how to angle the ball correctly if he makes up his mind too slowly, and it is often a very useful part of a goalkeeper's training to practise sprint starts. Both George Thompson, the Preston goalkeeper, and Bert Williams, of the Wolves and England, do this. It is very wise, too. After all, the goalkeeper has to dash out of his goal very quickly at times and if he can beat the opposing forwards to the ball he is going to save himself a lot of work.

Any footballer will tell you that the goalkeeper who comes out of his goal quickly is a very difficult customer to beat. Remember, the forward in possession of the ball has to keep control of the ball as well as steady himself to shoot.

ANTICIPATION comes through experience. A goalkeeper should be trying to spot whether a player is so one-footed that he always has to bring the ball on to his "good" foot before he shoots. He should try to anticipate the direction of a shot by a close study of a player's style. There is not the slightest doubt that a goalkeeper —even when the ball is nowhere near him—should be closely following the run of the game. In this way he can often spot how a move is developing. Never forget that forewarned is forearmed, and the goalkeeper who is watching the run of play can often be positioned to cut out high dangerous centres which would otherwise lead to a goal.

To give you a clear example of what I mean. Consider the case of a winger cutting in for goal. It may well be that he is the sort of chap who cannot shoot at an angle and prefers to clip the ball back. The goalkeeper who notices this habit of a winger can, in nine cases out of ten, ignore possibilities of a shot and be moving off his line to try and smother the centre as it comes over.

It is in incidents like these that a goalkeeper shows his anticipation—and the unhappy feature is that too often this part of his job passes unnoticed except to the players around him.

UNDERSTANDING: A goalkeeper must also have a very good understanding with his co-defenders. The full-backs, centre-half and goalkeeper must have absolute confidence in each other and play as a unit. They should be a tight defensive quartet, covering one another and helping each other out of difficulties all the time.

How often do we see one of the Arsenal full-backs on the line heading the ball away, with the goalkeeper beaten. Lucky Arsenal? Not on your life. That's perfect team work between a goalkeeper and his backs. All teams should aim to develop the same sort of defensive cover.

If the goalkeeper runs out of his goal to block an onrushing forward, then one of his full backs should be doubling back to cover the goal-line.

Full-backs, centre-half and goalkeeper should have tactical talks together to work out their system of defence, so that each one knows where the others will be for such things as corners, free-kicks, etc.

A goalkeeper can be helped a great deal if his co-defenders call to him correctly. I have already stated that most goalkeepers like to catch the ball cleanly if they can. Very often they move out to catch a ball, and perhaps don't notice an opponent coming on the blind side to challenge.

It is in moments like this that the full-backs or centre-half can save the goalkeeper a nasty bump, by shouting "Fist it" . . . or some other pre-arranged call.

In this way the goalkeeper knows immediately that there is some danger he hasn't seen and that it is safer to punch the ball away rather than catch it.

The goalkeeper also helps his team mates by shouting "*My ball, Jack*" or whatever is the Christian name of the player concerned) if he is going up to collect the ball. This will prevent the centre-half or his full-back going up to head the ball and thus impeding the goalkeeper.

It is also important in dealing with centres to know whether it is an inswinger or outswinger. If the ball is swinging in towards goal it is easier to catch because the ball is coming in to the goalkeeper all the time as he moves to grab it.

But if it is an outswinger—particularly some eight yards out—then it is often safer to fist it away. Remember, in circumstances like these there is generally a ruck of players and the ball is leaving the goalkeeper all the time. He will sometimes find it much safer to get under the ball with his fist and forearm

and help it on its way . . . that is away from his goal.

I remember Bill Luscombe, the Editor of "The Brompton Library" and a great friend of mine, telling me once that it was through playing in goal that he learnt the art of centre-forward play, so that whether you intend to continue to play in goal or not you can learn a lot about the game from that position by watching your opponents.

I started this chapter by emphasising how important it is in these days for a goalkeeper to develop constructive ideas. I now propose to show from an actual move just how a goalkeeper can set up a goal scoring attack.

CHAPTER IX

Two match-winning moves started by the goalkeeper. How George Farm, of Blackpool, turned a back-pass into a goal for his side. Bert Trautmann's link-up with Don Revie . . . and Gil Merrick's thoughtful clearance which gave England victory over Austria in Vienna.

EVERYONE must appreciate that a goalkeeper's job is at times tinged with a little danger. After all, it is not funny if you have to come running out of goal to dive at the feet of an opposing forward. Neither is it a happy state of affairs when the goalkeeper has to go up for a high ball in a goalmouth mêlée.

In situations like these, the goalkeeper's first aim is to save a goal; and also to protect himself, so we can forgive him if he doesn't *use the ball.* In tight corners, the best he can do is to clear his lines and leave it at that.

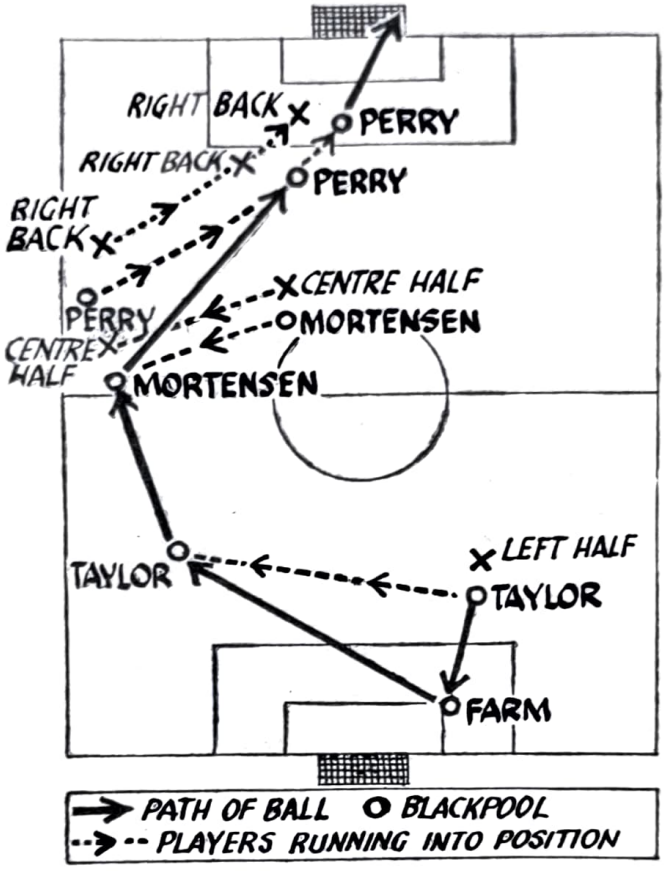
But what about the times when he gets the ball in the clear? Now that's when he should use the ball constructively.

Here, for instance, is a brilliant move which brought Blackpool a goal when they were under heavy pressure; and it illustrates, I think, the importance of a football team using the goalkeeper to start an attack.

This is what happened. Ernie Taylor, the brilliant Blackpool inside-right, received the ball facing his own goal some thirty yards out.

Now he could have turned with that ball; but he sensed an opponent behind him, moving in to tackle, so Ernie rolled the ball back to George Farm, the Blackpool goalkeeper.

I don't doubt for one moment that many spectators shouted "Windy" when Ernie did that . . . but he didn't stop to bother about what the crowd said.



Throw from Farm to Taylor brings Blackpool a goal.

As soon as he had passed back, he ran across the field into a wide open space and called for the ball. George Farm, instead of booting the ball upfield with a long clearance kick, threw it out to Taylor, who now had several yards to work in.

As soon as he had it, Stan Mortensen dashed out of the middle on to the left touchline, in one of those quick darts of his. Little Ernie quickly passed the ball to him.

While this was happening Bill Perry, the Blackpool left winger, who is extremely fast, switched into the middle to take Mortensen's position.

Now see what has happened? The speed of the move has created an opening. Why? Because Blackpool struck when their opponents were pressing hard for a goal and the defence had moved up to bolster the attack.

Mortensen's quick pass through the middle found Perry before the defence could fall back to cover, and Perry went racing through to score.

You cannot always score with a move like this, because it must have the element of surprise. Above all, you must have players running into position before the move is on. But trace it back and you will note that a little thought on the part of Ernie Taylor, plus the fact that George Farm in goal used the ball correctly, made it possible for a goalkeeper to set up a goal-scoring move.

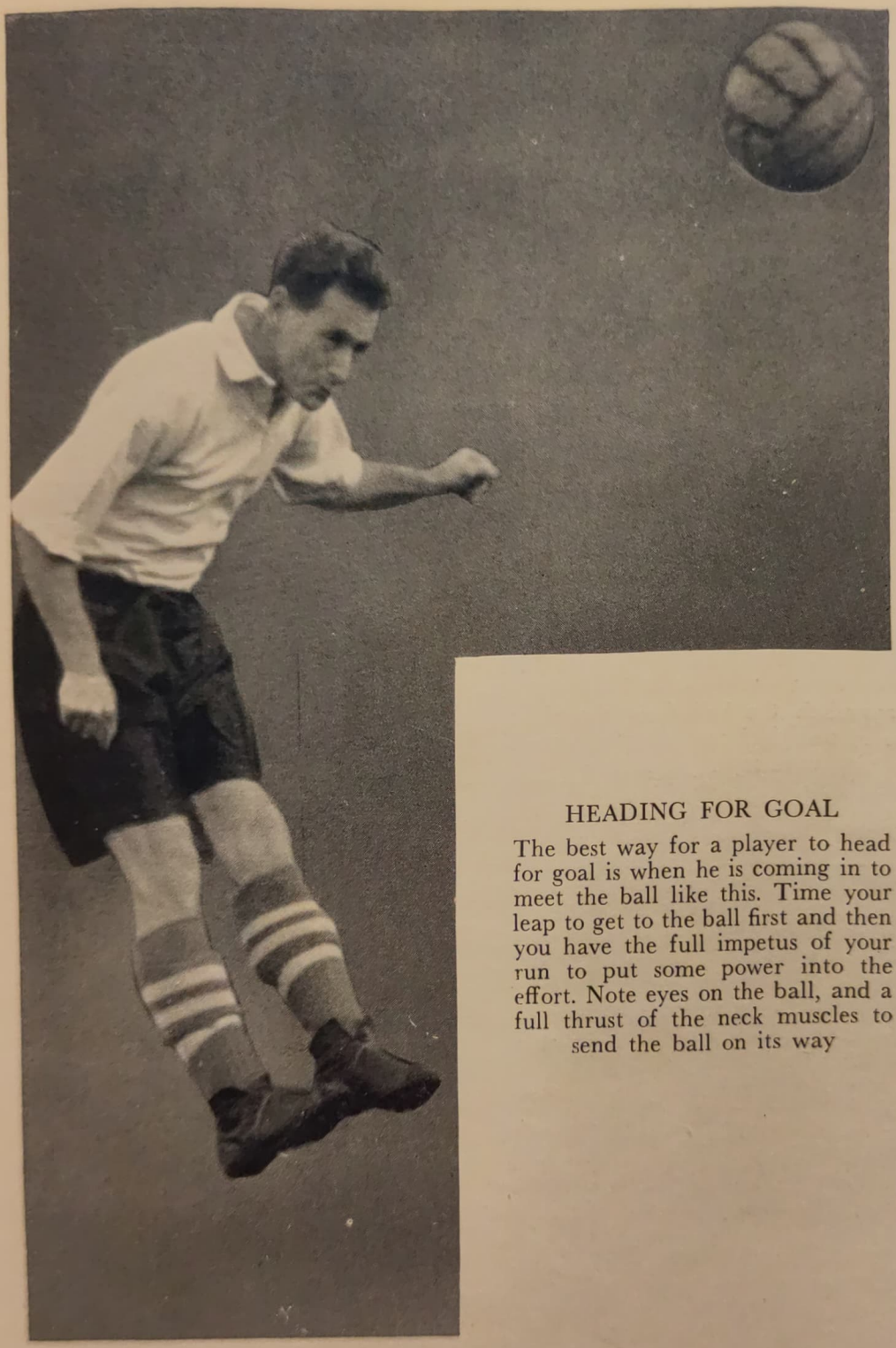
Perhaps Bert Trautmann, of Manchester City, is the finest example of a goalkeeper using the ball to start attacks in modern football. Bert is a wonderful thrower, and it is this link-up between Bert and Don Revie, the wandering centre-forward, which has brought Manchester City many goals.

Here is just one of the moves which frequently sent City racing away on the attack after their goal has been besieged. The success of this move depends on having a player like Revie to come back into an open space, so that the goalkeeper can find him.

Anyway, here it is. Trautmann saves, and as soon as he has the ball, Revie runs deep shouting for it. He is facing his own goal, but Trautman throws it straight to his feet.

Now the City defenders move out of their own penalty area as Revie holds the ball. One of the wing halves—Paul or Barnes—runs square to Revie, ready to take a pass. It depends who is in the best position, but usually Barnes is the man to link up.

Now, as soon as Revie pulls an opponent to him, he



HEADING FOR GOAL

The best way for a player to head for goal is when he is coming in to meet the ball like this. Time your leap to get to the ball first and then you have the full impetus of your run to put some power into the effort. Note eyes on the ball, and a full thrust of the neck muscles to send the ball on its way

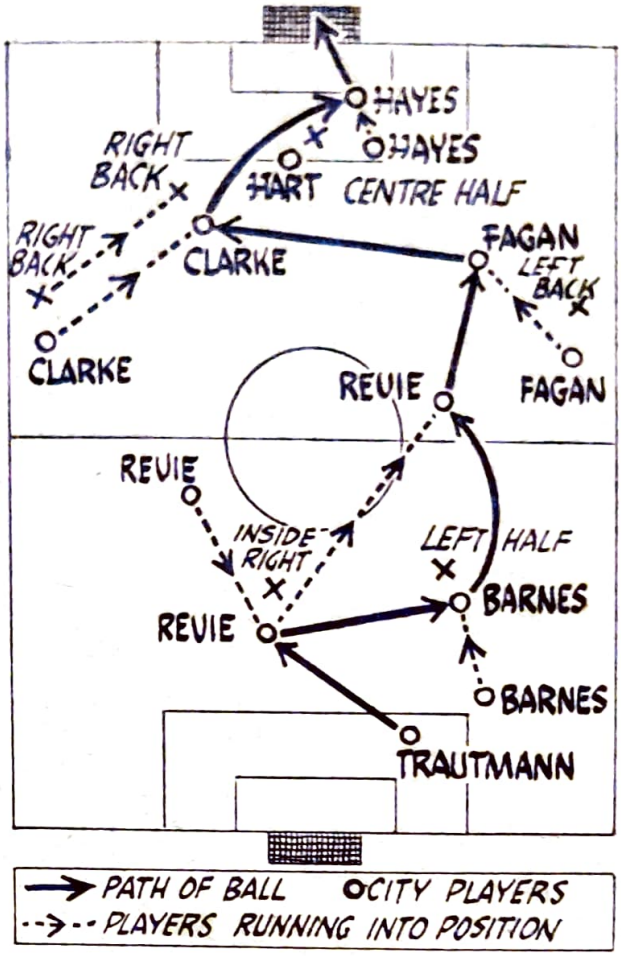
I approach the ball from the right side as though I am going to kick it with my right foot

Eyes still on the ball, only I am leaning the other way now. Problem for the defenders as they watch me sway first one way then the other: what am I going to do next?

Now I am taking the ball with the outside of my left foot . . . but the move is not finished yet

I bring the right foot across and in front of the ball so that as I carry on taking the ball with the left foot I will have my body between my opponent and the ball

Tactical Hint: Try this run up to the ball without anyone near . . . It perfects body balance and helps you develop a body swerve



Typical Manchester City move which starts with throw from Trautmann to Revie.

slips a short square pass to Barnes and runs forward into an open space. Barnes rolls the ball to him, and in a matter of seconds City have made perhaps forty yards while their opponents try to get back into position.

The aim is to get Revie in the clear, somewhere about the half-way line, where he can now use his accurate passing ability to use the long ball to one of City's forwards. Time after time in season 1954-55 City made quick breakaways like this, playing pure football from the goalkeeper outwards.

You must bear in mind that these moves are executed

quickly against opponents who have moved up into an all-out attack, and this naturally makes it much more difficult for them to plug the holes in defence.

There is nothing so devastating to any team than to have a goal scored against them in this way, when they have had a period of all-out pressure. Their lines of communication are stretched to the limit, then the quick breakaway tears them wide open.

I hope these two moves will serve to illustrate to young goalkeepers just how important their job is. A cool head and clever throw or kick in moments of crisis can often bring your side a goal.

In the Vienna international of 1952, England beat Austria in the closing minutes with a goal scored against the run of play.

Austria were threatening to overrun the England defence. Gil Merrick made a nice save and, seeing that I was in the clear, immediately gave the ball to me. I shoved it through the middle to Nat Lofthouse who was calling for it, and Nat went on in his usual lion-hearted style to score one of the greatest goals of his career.

The British troops among the crowd went wild with joy at the smash and grab winner . . . but we in the England team knew only too well that it all began with a thoughtful clearance from Merrick.

In training, I advise all goalkeepers to practise throwing the ball accurately and also to practise the drop-kick clearance which is so accurate, because it can be driven hard along the turf to a waiting team mate.

Wingers can help the goalkeeper by coming deep to take his clearances. Remember, it is no use the goalkeeper trying to clear the ball constructively if his team mates are not running into the open spaces where he can find them.

CHAPTER X

Never use the big aimless kick if you can start an attack with a short accurate pass. It is better to pivot round the centre half than play square right out on the touchline. The art of positional play and the importance of having a complete understanding with the goalkeeper.

FOR too long the big aimless clearance has become the feature of full-back play in this country. Spectators have forgotten the classic era; the way Warney Cresswell, Ernie Blenkinsop, and Tommy Cooper played when they were in their prime.

There seems to be an unhappy idea that all a full back has to do is to shadow the opposing winger, use the sliding tackle if need be to get the ball, and then belt the ball upfield for the poor unfortunate forwards to chase.

This never was the way to play football, and never will be. I cannot emphasise too strongly that the young player who takes up the full-back position should, from his very earliest days, develop his attacking qualities.

Very often a forward line gets blamed for a bad day, when often the trouble lies further back. There is nothing so heartbreaking for any team than the sight of their own full-backs and goalkeeper over-kicking the forward line. That is just kicking away possession of the ball. A football team is not made up of two units—one defensive and the other attacking. A football team should be a TEAM of eleven men, and that means as soon as they have possession of the ball they should be trying to organise a well-drilled attack on the opposing goal.

Now let us consider what are the requirements of a class full-back.

He should be fast, quick on the turn, a strong tackler, good in the air, have sound positional sense, a sensible working arrangement with his goalkeeper, centre-half and wing-half, and he should also be capable of passing the ball accurately to a colleague.

Obviously the full-back who has all these qualities is a superman. Nevertheless he should possess all these attributes to some degree.

The first aim of a full-back is to get the ball. If he cannot get it, then he should try to crowd the opposing winger out on to the touchline until the rest of the defence can fall back and cover the goalmouth.

It is absolutely essential to follow the run of play, so that he can often break up a move by a rapid interception. For instance, when I play against Roger Byrne of Manchester United, it is quite noticeable that Roger studies the game closely. He is a very fast full-back and he tries to prevent the ball reaching me. By quick anticipation he can often nip in smartly and intercept the pass to the winger.

Less experienced players wait until the winger actually has the ball before they move in to tackle. That is why so many have to resort to the do-or-die sliding tackle.

Personally I hate to see full backs sliding in. You can forgive a man going in like this as a last resort to prevent a certain goal. But in 99 cases out of a 100, he slides to his doom. It is the easiest thing in the world for a class winger to beat this type of tackle. If the full-back fails in his attempt he is left sitting disconsolately on the turf. He has put himself out of the game, and the attacking side now have a spare man to utilise. No! give me the full-back who goes in cleanly. At least if he is beaten, he still has a chance to recover.

In the old days most teams had their full-backs playing square. That is to say they had them positioned almost on the touchline, marking the winger. Some sides still favour this method . . . but it does in fact leave the middle dangerously vulnerable.

After all, if Preston are playing Blackpool, and Stan Matthews makes one of his raids down the right touchline, what earthly use would it be if Willie Cunningham, our right-back, blithely stood out on the opposite touchline when his presence would be much more urgently required helping to cover the goalmouth.

It takes experience of course for the full-back to play the pivotal system round the centre-half. But, with experience, he can save his side a lot of trouble with this method.

This is how it works in practice. Suppose a side is attacking down the left wing. The left-half should be buttressing the attack; and his left-back should also be moving up perhaps thirty yards behind the forward line.

The centre-half is covering the centre of the field and the right-back should be slightly behind him with one eye on his winger; yet nicely positioned to come across and cover the centre-half should a long ball down the middle elude him.

The left-winger, bear in mind, is still *outside* the right-back and would have to beat him before any real danger could arise in that direction. If the attack is on the right wing, the left-back comes across to cover the centre-half. In other words the full-backs act like a pendulum, swinging in an arc across field to make sure there are no openings down the middle.

Only by following the run of the ball is it possible to work this system.

I think where most full-backs make a big mistake is going straight in for the tackle. Naturally they should

be so positioned that they are always within striking distance of the winger they are marking.

When the ball swings over, the nearer the full-back should be to his man. In this way, as I have already pointed out, he can sometimes dart forward and intercept the intended pass. If he cannot, then I advise every full-back to face square on to the winger.

If he positions himself in this manner, it does not matter which way the winger goes, the full-back is still poised for his tackle. And you know, there are not many wingers who can go both ways. They can generally be put under these two headings: (a) Those who prefer to go outside and hug the touchline and (b) those who cut in immediately for goal in a diagonal run.

The clever full-back should in the early stages of the game be able to find out which way the winger likes to go. If he likes to go outside, then the full-back should, at all times, crowd him on to the touchline. If he likes to come inside, then the defender should cut off that route.

Most class full-backs make a note of the men they play against so that when they next meet, they have a guide to their opponent's style of play. This is a point young full-backs should note most carefully. It may sound silly at first to have a notebook . . . but by making notes after every game played you would be surprised just how much information you can amass.

On the continent I have noticed many teams prefer the wing-half to play wide, to take the winger, leaving the full-backs close in to cover the centre-half. This has the effect of having four men strung across the field —rather like a double barred gate. It looks a bit cumbersome at first . . . but it can be very effective if every member of the team is aware of this style of play and position themselves accordingly.

In modern football, the tendency more and more has

been for the goalkeeper to act like a third full-back. He can save his team mates a lot of trouble if he uses the penalty area intelligently. This close understanding between goalkeeper and full-backs is a feature of all class teams.

Often when a goalkeeper is coming out to clear, his full-backs can be a great help by shouting an instruction to him. For instance, the goalkeeper may come out to catch a ball. At the last moment he may be in danger of being hindered by an opponent. To catch the ball cleanly might invite danger . . . and it is then that a full-back who can see the situation more clearly can help by shouting: "FIST IT." The goalkeeper then knows that danger is imminent.

For corners, the full-backs play a vital role. The best method is for one full-back to stand inside the line by the post. The man nearest the corner kicker should be beyond his post, ready to block any shots or headers . . . yet in no way impeding the goalkeeper as he comes across.

One last word to our full-backs. Never be afraid of passing back to your own goalkeeper. It is a golden rule —particularly for defenders—*always play the ball the way you are facing.*

The full-back who tries to turn with the ball in his own penalty area is inviting trouble. He can try it out by the corner flag, and get away with it. But right in front of goal he is just asking for trouble.

How many times do you hear spectators shouting: "WINDY" when a full-back passes back to his goalkeeper. It is not being frightened at all. Very often the ball has been lobbed over his head and he is left chasing the ball towards his own goal followed by an opponent.

How simple it is to touch the ball back, and then run into an open space for the goalkeeper to throw it

out and start an attacking move. Surely this is much better than blindly trying to hook the ball over your head or else flick it into touch?

That's football for morons. It should have no part in any constructive football team, unless the defender is so harassed he can do nothing else.

Intelligent full-back play is a vital part of any team. I know it from my own experience at Preston. Many of our attacks have stemmed from that lovely left foot hook of Willie Cunningham's at right-back, directed to me on the right wing.

Look at Manchester City in season 1954-55. They were determined to try and play a Hungarian style of game with Don Revie as a sort of roaming quarter-back. Revie was playing what is known as the withdrawn centre-forward game. This meant that the whole field was his to play in and the Manchester City players were instructed to play to him because he is such a clever distributor of the ball. What use would Revie's positioning have been if City's full-backs, Jimmy Meadows and Roy Little, had played that silly game of belting the ball upfield for the forwards to chase. Often in their own penalty area they would roll the ball a mere eight or nine yards to Revie standing in an open space.

If they had blindly kicked the ball over Revie's head they would have put him out of the game, and the ball would just as quickly have come back into City's goal-mouth.

This thoughtful approach to full-back play is what made Ernie Blenkinsop and his kind such wonderful players. We want more of that type before English soccer gets back on top again.

CHAPTER XI

Attacking moves by full-back and half-backs—how Ramsey and Blanchflower of Tottenham combine.

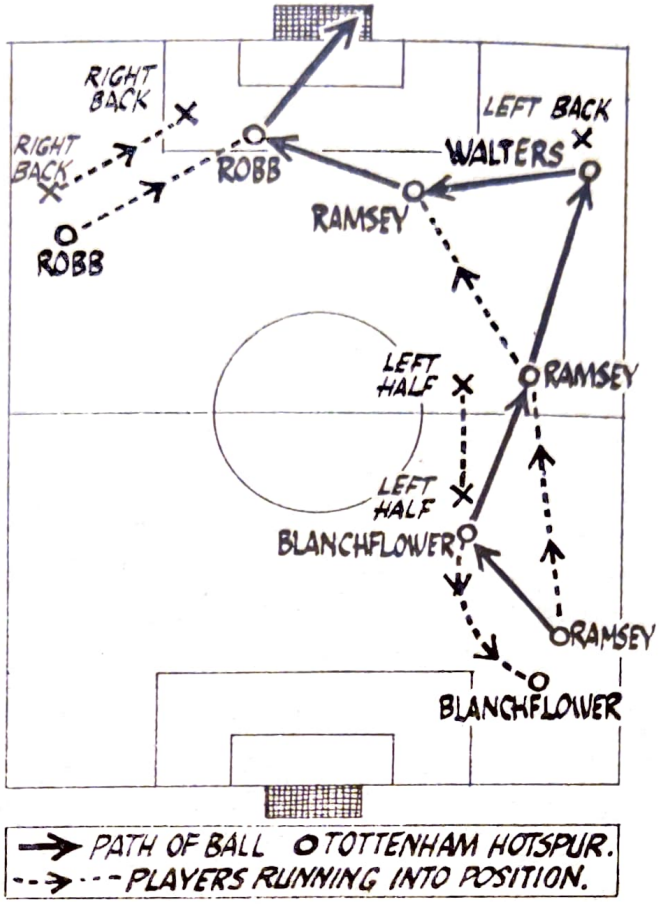
WE have just been discussing full-back play and the importance of them linking-up to start an attack. In recent years Alf Ramsey, the cultured right-back of Tottenham Hotspur, who has now retired to become manager of Ipswich Town, brought attacking full-back play to a fine art.

Ramsey preferred to delay his tackle rather than go in first time and perhaps be left standing. However, once he had the ball it was the other side who had to start worrying, for he always tried to use the ball constructively.

When Danny Blanchflower, the Irish international right-half joined Tottenham from Aston Villa, he and Ramsey developed a fine understanding, based on attacking football. Here's one of the many moves they perfected. I understand it led to one of their goals in the Cup ties last season.

Anyway, here it is, and I think you will agree that it shows how a full-back can set up an attack and keep it going. In this case Ramsey gets the ball, either from an interception or his own goalkeeper. He pushes it forward to Blanchflower.

Blanchflower tries to pull the opposing left-half in to tackle, as Ramsey runs down the touchline. As Blanchflower is challenged, he pushes the ball to Ramsey again. The right-back is now in the region of the halfway line . . . the sort of position where most full-backs



How Alf Ramsey of Tottenham Hotspur and his right half-back, Danny Blanchflower, link up to start an attacking move.

like to give the ball a hearty punt upfield and then scurry back into position themselves.

Ramsey does no such thing. He drives the ball upfield to his right winger (in this case Sonny Walters) and runs forward himself until he is in an inside-right position.

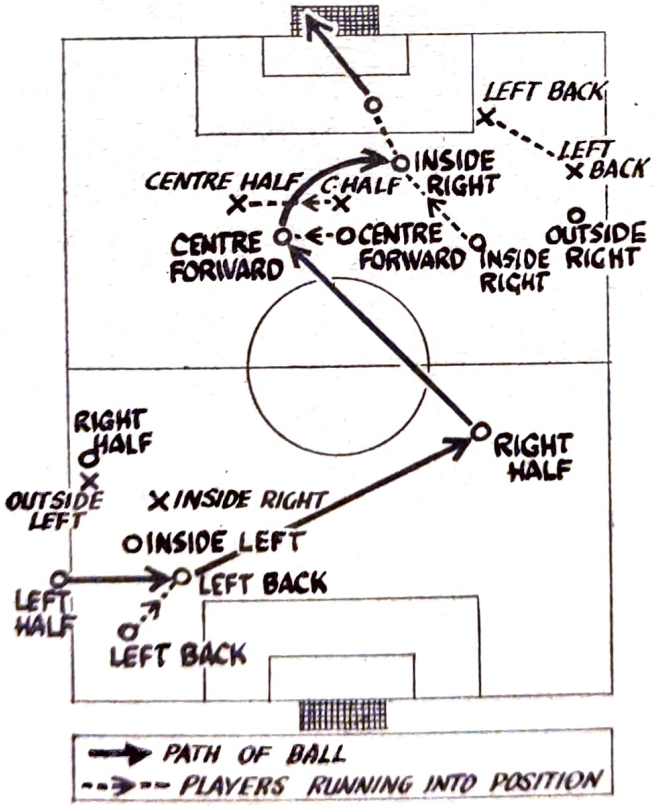
The winger shoves the ball inside to Ramsey, who crosses it to George Robb cutting in from the left wing, so that he can have a shot at goal.

Now this move has been successful in actual match play, but you will notice that as soon as Ramsey goes upfield, Blanchflower switches to right-back, to take his position in case the move breaks down.

You would not normally advise any full-back to venture so far upfield as this. In Ramsey's case, he is a good footballer and rarely loses the ball when he has it under control. Again, the unexpected sight of a full-back advancing so far into an opponents' half, can often upset the opposition. But whether the move succeeds or not, it is a fine example of an understanding between a full-back and his wing-half.

In the other diagram I am showing how easy it is for a full-back to switch the run of play from one side of the field to the other from a throw-in.

It is all a question of using your brain. After all, at a throw-in there is usually a congested part of the field where one or two players are jostling each other to try and find an open space. In this case, if the full-back finds himself unmarked he can run forward as the left-



How a full-back can switch the play across the field from a throw-in.

half feints to throw the ball down the touchline. Instead, he whips it infield to his left-back.

The left-back crosses the ball to the right-half, and the opposition are now in the position of having to re-group their defence to meet a new danger.

Sheffield Wednesday actually scored with the move I am illustrating here. The ball went from the left-back to the right-half and straight downfield to the centre-forward, who had wandered from the middle of the field taking the centre-half with him.

As the ball came through to him head high, the centre-forward deftly headed it forward over the head of the centre-half and the inside-right following up quickly had the ball in the back of the net in a flash.

Yet this move would never have been possible if the full-back had not realised he could start an attack in this way. Even if the move doesn't produce a goal, it is a still quick way of switching the point of attack.

These two moves are the sort of thing every full-back should try to imitate. Remember stopping the other fellow is only half the job; use that ball when you get it. In the long run it will save you a lot of unnecessary running about.

CHAPTER XII

A team is only as good as its half-back line. These are the men who stop and start attacks; the link between deep defence and attack.

IT has been said with great truth that any football team is only as good as their half-back line. A glance at the League Championship winners over the years confirms that view. Mind you, I am not trying to say that every team which wins the League title is necessarily the classiest, but they are generally the strongest and most consistent.

As older football fans know, the duties of centre-half were drastically altered when the off-side law was changed. In the old days most teams had an attacking centre-half who boldly took the ball upfield to set the forward line in motion.

The Austrians revived this style when they built their international team round their brilliant centre-half, Ocwirk. He roamed everywhere, although he was supposed to be centre-half. In fact, the Austrians merely reshuffled their team. The left full-back used to take over the role of stopper centre-half in the middle of the field. A wing-half would drop back to full-back and an inside forward would play deep as a wing-half.

So far as I can see, every team must have somebody playing well back to cover the centre of the goal.

Once the off-side law was changed it altered the whole structure of defensive play. No team could afford the luxury of a brilliant ball-playing centre-half going on attacking excursions. He had only to make a bad

pass and the whole middle of the field was open for a long through pass to the opposing centre-forward.

The stopper centre-half was first adopted by Arsenal, under Herbert Chapman. They soon discovered that the answer to the quick break through was defence in depth, with the centre-half covered by his wing-halves and full-backs. So far as was humanly possible, the centre-half was instructed not to be pulled out of position. After all, most goals are scored from the inside forward or centre-forward positions, and if these routes to goal are blocked it takes clever team play to break through.

The role of stopper centre-half was perfected by Herbert Roberts of Arsenal, who soon became known as "Policeman" Roberts. Most teams still follow the Arsenal pattern, and only in recent years has there been a determined effort to surmount this obstacle by withdrawing the centre-forward and putting him on roaming duties.

However, before we consider this question of the deep-lying centre-forward, let us take a look at modern centre-half play. In recent years there has been a tendency for him to become more mobile. Centre-forwards like Tommy Lawton, Roy Bentley and little Charlie Wayman, refused to stay shackled in the centre of the field. They moved on to the wings to try and pull the centre-half with them.

This has called for more fluid movement by the stopper centre-half. He still tries to patrol his beat along the eighteen yards line, but he must be fast enough to run on to the wings to block any threatened danger. It has also meant that the full-backs, using the cover back system, have at all times to be ready to run into the middle to take his position whenever he is drawn out on to the touchline to make a tackle.

Whether the centre-half should be mobile or stay put in the middle of the field depends on two things:

1. Whether he is fast enough for the job.
2. What sort of team he is playing in.

To illustrate this point: Frank Brennan, of Newcastle United and Scotland, is one of the best stoppers in the game. He is a big man and very difficult to get past, but by the very nature of his build it is not advisable for him to go racing out on to the wings. He is much more effective when he stands firm as a rock covering the middle.

Neil Franklin is another centre-half who is very mobile; so too is Billy Wright the England skipper. Yet when you analyse all their varying styles of play, the basic principles of the job still remain.

They must shut the opposing centre-forward out of the game, and if he does go wandering about all over the field, they must still keep the shutters up across the centre of the goal.

Now what do we look for in centre-half play? The first asset must be dominance in the air. I know football should be played on the ground, and that many of the big chaps who have become fine stopper centre-halves would not be nearly so effective if the ball was worked quickly in short sharp ground passing. The plain truth is, however, that so many teams rely on high centres into the goalmouth that every centre-half *has* to be good in the air.

He must be quite fearless, and in training he should spend a lot of time heading clear corners and centres from the wingers.

Anticipation plays a big part too. He must have enough knowledge of football moves to be able to intercept quickly. Harry Johnston, the Blackpool and England player, was converted from wing-half to centre-half. Because he was a constructive wing-half he was able, when he took over in the middle, to anticipate many moves. Often you will see Harry (and Billy

Wright, too) darting in front of the centre-forward and intercepting the long through pass. It does not look so spectacular as the daring tackle or the flying header, but anticipation like this saves a side a lot of trouble.

The great skill in centre-half play is knowing when to tackle and when to delay. After all, a full-back may miss his tackle or miss a kick, and get away with it. A centre-half rarely has a second chance.

He is covering the most vulnerable route to goal, so his policy must always be " can I get this ball safely? If not, I must crowd the man and delay the tackle until I am covered."

That's why in these days you often see a defence funnelling back and allowing the opposing team to run unchallenged with the ball right up to the penalty area.

Personally I do not like to see these tactics overdone because I feel it could bring the game into disrepute. On the other hand, it is quite fatal for a centre-half to go sliding in for the ball—particularly if he is faced by two opponents.

There is, I am happy to say, a tendency in big football for the centre-half to play more constructively. This should spread through minor football too. There is nothing so boring as to see a centre-half kick the ball out of play every time he is challenged. I do not say he should attempt a suicidal dribble, but he should still be a good enough ball player to get himself out of trouble.

If he has a good understanding with his full-backs and goalkeeper he can always pass the ball to them and run for a return.

The centre-half, like his full-backs, should never be afraid of rolling the ball back to his goalkeeper when he is facing his own goal.

If he is a constructive player he can tap the ball back,

SHOOTING FOR GOAL

All wingers should be able to cut in and have a shot at goal. This is how I do it. You'll notice I'm a natural left footer, and this is sometimes of great use playing on the right wing because it can give you a wider angle of goal to shoot at. In this action study the ball has already left my foot, and I'm just starting to follow through. Note the toes of the kicking foot pointing *down*. When contact is made with the ball the instep of the non-kicking foot, should be level with the ball; and the knee of the leg you are kicking with should be *right over the ball*. If you are doing all these things correctly, you cannot boot the ball over the bar

THE ORTHORDOX TRAP

This is the trap which most boys learn first of all. As the ball comes straight to him, the player inclines the sole of his boot towards the ball, and cushions it against the turf with the studs. In match play I find this method of trapping most useful to wing half-backs, or inside-forwards collecting a goal-kick or long clearance when they have time to kill the ball and look up before parting

wait until the centre-forward challenges, then he is in the clear to receive the ball from the goalkeeper. This is when the real constructive centre-half like John Charles or Harry Johnston can shine by bringing the ball up, pulling another opponent to him, then parting with the ball.

Another point which stamps the class centre-half is the way he glides the high balls down off his forehead, and directs it to a wing-half or full-back.

Never forget that the centre-half should form with his full-backs, a tight triangular pocket, aimed at strangling all attacks by the opposition.

One of the finest examples in modern soccer of a stopper centre-half playing a constructive game is John Charles, of Leeds United. A player of Charles's calibre only emerges once in a lifetime, but he is a model for all young players. He is big and strong, yet never uses his weight unfairly. Even though he is such a wonderful header, he still prefers to bring the ball down when he has time, and then he uses it cleverly. He is fast, has a body swerve, perfect ball control, and a ready anticipation of what the other side is trying to do. This, plus his mobility and football brain, adds up to a complete centre-half under modern day conditions. You could not find a better model of centre-half play at its best and most adventuresome.

Wing-halves, like the inside forwards, should be the hardest workers in any team. That is to say they have to cover most ground in stopping and starting attacks.

Styles of wing-half play vary from team to team. Some managers forbid their wing-halves to venture over the half-way line with the ball. Others like their wing-halves to join in attacks as a sixth forward.

However, it is safe to assume that sixty-five per cent of a wing-half's work is checking and tackling. The

other thirty-five per cent of the time he should be using the ball in constructing moves.

My own view is that a team should aim to have one defensive wing-half and the other a first-class ball-player linking up with the attack.

The first essential is for the wing-half to have an understanding with his full-back. Often during a game a wing-half has to swoop in to tackle the opposing winger. The full-back should then be covering the inside forward. Sounds simple I know . . . but the point cannot be emphasised too strongly.

I have already pointed out that the full-back should always try to roll the ball accurately to a team mate rather than use a big aimless kick. Most of these passes are bound to be to the wing-half in front of him. It is therefore up to the wing-half to run into an open space calling for the ball whenever the full-back is in possession.

In general practice, the wing-half should, like the inside forward, always bring the ball down and pass along the turf. When you see a team playing air ball, almost invariably it is the fault of the wing-halves chipping the ball or using the lobbed pass.

A wing-half is usually a little slower than an inside forward. As the ball is often coming towards him he has more time to think than the inside man, who has to make his mind up in a split second, with the ball coming to him at all angles. Nevertheless in terms of pure football the wing-half is generally the thinker of the team.

We saw that when Bozkik, the Hungarian right-half, came over here. It is true Puskas and Koscis, the Hungarian inside forwards, did lots of clever things near the goalmouth, but it was Bozkik's thoughtful passes—particularly to the non-stop Hidegkuti—which started the Hungarian machine in motion.

Perhaps the greatest fault a wing-half can have is

running with the ball and carrying it upfield needlessly. The old axiom of: PULL A MAN AND PART still holds as good today as ever it did.

A wing-half running up with the ball is asking for trouble. He should never have to run more than fifteen to twenty yards. If he exceeds that it is a safe bet that the opposition team is running back towards their own goal so that no opening is created.

But first the wing-half must get possession. Therefore he should be a strong attacker, good in the air, and very good at anticipation. In fact, I would say a wing-half gets the ball by clever interceptions as much as by tackling.

The tactics of a wing-half was perhaps best expressed in the instructions given to Ken Barnes, the Manchester City right-half, when he played against Len Shackleton of Sunderland. These were simply: "When Sunderland are attacking keep close to Shackleton. When we are attacking get as far away as possible into an open space."

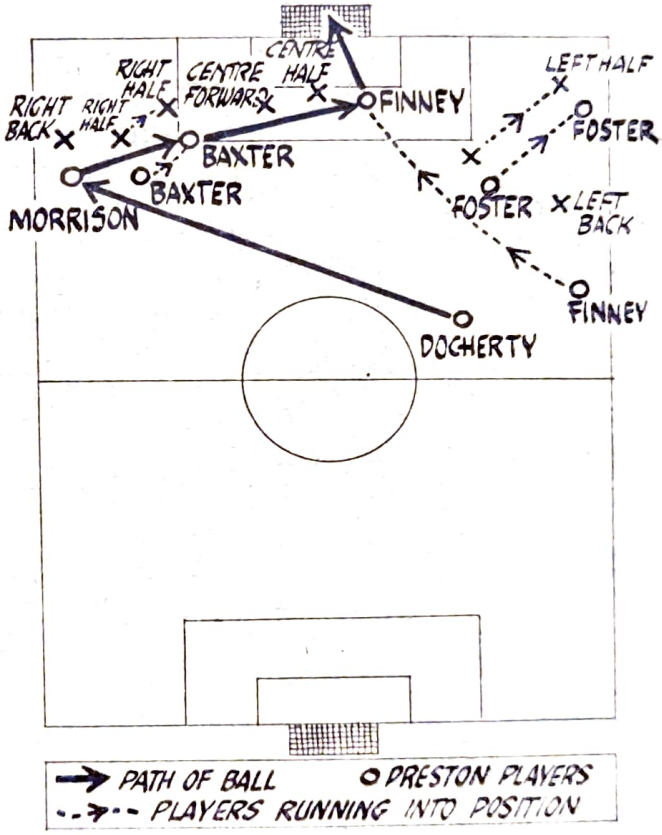
For there is nothing more certain than this, that a wing-half should first try to shut the opposing inside forward out of the game by close marking. Yet he should be such a good passer and controller of the ball that when he has it the opposing inside forward should be just as worried.

It is this aspect of wing-half play which deteriorated after the war, although there are signs that we are producing wing-halves in the old classic mould once again. Feeding his forwards is an absolute must for a wing-half. As he does this work some thirty or forty yards from the opposing goal he does not always share in the glory of the goal scorer . . . but his leading up work is just as important as the man who supplies the finishing touch.

In passing the wing-half generally uses the push pass with the inside of the foot because it is most accurate,

and it is easier to collect. There are times when he should also be able to use the long pass with the instep particularly to the opposite wing or inside the full-back for his own winger.

This switching of play from one wing to another is largely the responsibility of the wing-halves. This is how we work it at Preston. In fact we scored our first goal against Sunderland in the Cup tie at Deepdale in season 1954-55.

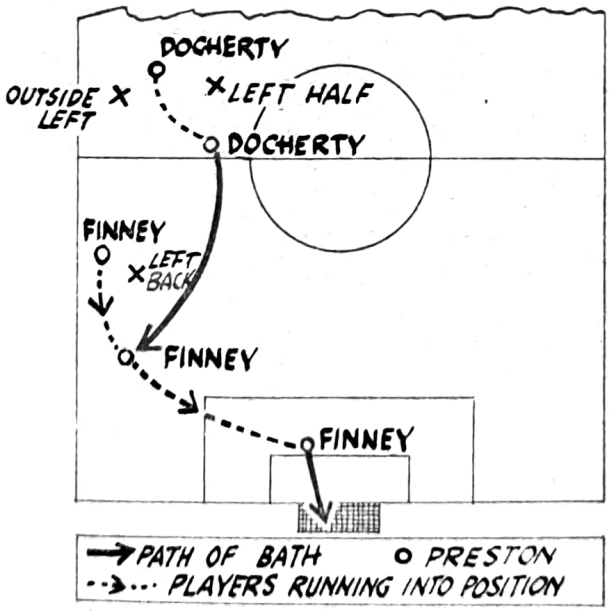


Crossfield pass from right-half to outside-left.

CHAPTER XIII

The value of a wing-half holding the ball long enough to throw the opposing defence off balance . . . and how Preston scored with such a move. An illustration of how a wing-half can join up in attack and score.

IN his attacking work the wing-half should always be seeking to form the triangular link-up with his winger and inside forward. He should aim to get into position so that it is always possible for the men in front to pass the ball back to him so that he can, if necessary, switch the point of attack.



Tommy Docherty intercepts and starts to run across the field to pull the defence with him —then chips the ball with his left foot over the right-back's head to me.

In the diagram I am detailing a clever move by my

Preston colleague Tommy Docherty. We actually scored with this one at Burnden Park and although I received the cheers for putting the ball into the net, it was entirely due to the unselfish service of Tommy Docherty.

As most football fans know, Tommy is a little terrier of a man, whose keen eyes are always following the flight of the ball. In this particular case he was able to anticipate an intended pass and nipped in to intercept.

He could have rolled the ball immediately to me, but I was closely marked, so Tommy set off on a little run veering to his left all the time. The Bolton defence must have thought he was going to use the crossfield pass to Angus Morrison, our left winger (see previous chapter). At all events the defence moved across slightly and Tommy, seeing this, suddenly pivoted and clipped the ball over the full-back's head with a lovely left foot chip.

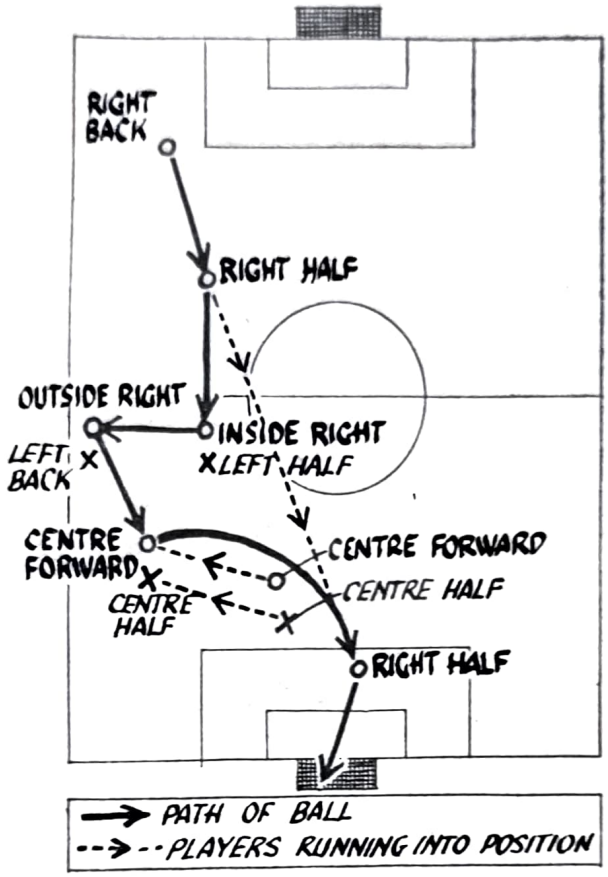
I had been keeping on-side, because I half expected what would happen, and as soon as the ball had been kicked I was away past the back before he could turn. I cut in for goal, and tapped the ball past the goal-keeper.

This move I think shows how important it is at times for the wing-half to delay his pass that fraction so as to try and pull the defence out of position. An orthodox pass would have achieved nothing, but by holding the ball and using it intelligently, Tommy Docherty engineered this goal. It is the type of move all wing-halves should be trying to lay on for their own forwards.

The second move is rather a different matter. In this case the right-half actually finishes up as an inside forward, scoring a goal.

Here again, this move was brought off in match play

in the Old England v. Young England match at Highbury, on the eve of the Cup Final.



The right-half starts a triangular passing move—then runs through the middle to finish it off when the centre-forward pulls the centre-half out of the middle.

Briefly this is what happened. The ball rolled forward to Harry Johnston, the Blackpool and England half-back. Harry was playing at right-half in this match. He passed the ball forward to Wilf Mannion, who snapped it out to Stan Matthews.

Stan, the mesmerist, held it long enough for Tommy Lawton to run out of the middle. Everyone was expecting another of Stan's famous solo dribbles. Instead, after holding the ball for several seconds, Stan slipped it to Tommy Lawton.

There would have been no immediate danger, but for the fact that Harry Johnston, as soon as he passed the ball, saw that Lawton's move from the middle had left a gap. He raced upfield shouting for the ball, and as soon as Tommy Lawton had it he had time to turn and crack it through the middle to Johnston.

As a matter of fact, Harry's shot hit the post . . . but this move was worth a goal all the way. Everyone must appreciate that a wing-half is rarely called on to race through the middle like this. But who can deny that such flexibility in attack can often bring a goal? It is a perfect example of a wing-half trying to bring himself back into the game after he has parted with the ball.

Yes, I know you'll be asking what would happen if the move had broken down with Johnston so far out of position. Take another look at the diagram, and see the position of Mannion. He is well-placed to fall back to take over the wing-half duties if any such emergency had arisen. That is what I meant when I stated earlier that a wing-half and his inside forward should have this sort of close understanding in covering up for one another.

CHAPTER XIV

The ideal inside forward—importance of stamina and quick thinking—shooting with either foot and being able to switch the point of attack.

IT'S a cliché I know, but I always believe that attack is the best form of defence. That doesn't mean to say every member of the team should race madly upfield every time he has possession of the ball. But in the best teams it is quite noticeable that there is a fluid movement, with the whole side moving rhythmically upfield and downfield together.

I have already pointed out that very often when a forward line seems ragged it is due to the careless clearances of their own defenders. The reverse applies. When a defence is over-run, it is often due to the forwards' inability to hold the ball and construct clever attacks.

For this reason an absolute *must* in any team is a scheming inside forward . . . a " general " who dictates the run of play.

It annoys me when I hear spectators loudly cheering some clever little tricks in mid-field regardless of how the player parts with the ball. All the great inside forwards like Raich Carter, Wilf Mannion, Jimmy Hagan and Peter Doherty, are absolute masters of the ball. They have a terrific repertoire of tricks . . . but if you study their play closely you will see that all these tricks are subordinated to the vital need of opening out the game.

Inside forwards, above all, should be accurate passers of the ball.

I think most boys like to imagine themselves as an inside forward. . . . I did myself, but it wasn't until I moved from inside-left to outside-right that I made any sort of impression.

Well then, you say, what do you look for in an inside forward, and how does a young player know whether he will be a good inside forward or not?

The first quality I look for in an inside forward is: has he got stamina? For there is nothing more certain than this: no chap can ever be a great inside forward unless he is able to cover a lot of ground. He has always to be looking for the ball. When his team is defending he is expected to get back into his own penalty area to bring the ball upfield. When his team is attacking he is also expected to join in the final assault on the opposing goal. So you see, apart from his stamina, he must also be a *quick mover* on the ball and a very *quick thinker.*

It is asking a lot isn't it, for a chap to be something of a long distance runner and a speed merchant at the same time? I don't suggest that an inside forward has to be a greyhound . . . but if the ball is bobbing about in the opposing penalty area he is expected to be able to pounce on it and take a lightning shot at goal.

There are all sorts of inside forwards, of course . . . some are short and stocky; some are willowy and graceful movers; some are big and burly; some quite slightly built.

But they can, for our purpose, be split into two groups.

1. The chaps like Raich Carter, Wilf Mannion and Jimmy Hagan, who are clever ball manipulators and the " general " of the attack.

2. Those like Harold Hassall, Ivor Broadis and Dennis Wilshaw, who are quite capable of working hard in mid-field to organise attacks, but who are also

so fast and deadly that they are most dangerous in and around the opposing penalty area.

The latter group are the sort of chaps who fasten on to a ball some thirty yards out, where they are so fast and deceptive on the ball that they are quite capable of bursting through quickly on their own to score.

Happy is the team therefore which boasts a scheming inside forward playing deep to open out the game; and another inside forward very fast to carry on the good work farther upfield.

In actual match play, of course, both inside men must be ready to go well back into their own half, to forage for the ball. But it is not advisable to have two men lying back all the time. They tend to get in each other's way; and it makes it easier for the opposing defence if they have to mark only three forwards (the two wingers and centre-forward) instead of four.

Naturally in the best of teams there should be a flexibility about the attack so that at times one inside man plays the deep scheming role for a spell; then the other man takes over this job.

Perhaps the best example of this inside forward play was in Derby County's team just after the war. They had as their inside forwards Raich Carter and Peter Doherty. Now here were two scheming inside forwards, both with a match-winning shot. Obviously it would be stupid to detail Doherty to lie upfield all the time or Raich Carter to play deep all the time.

They worked as a single unit, up and down together, always in touch with one another, and always bringing each other into the game to score goals.

A different type of inside forward link was in the Newcastle United team when they won the Cup in 1951. At inside-right they had wee Ernie Taylor, a brilliant ball juggler who is rarely to be seen scoring goals. The other Newcastle inside forward was George

Robledo, a fast strong player very difficult to shake off the ball.

Newcastle's strategy had to be built around these two men, so it was obvious to use Taylor as the " general " of the attack, while Robledo—playing alongside Jackie Milburn—worked a fast and dangerous double centre-forward thrust down the middle.

Robledo still went back to help out the defence . . . but generally this was only when Newcastle were under pressure.

So you see, as a general rule in team building you must decide which of the inside forwards is going to be the chief schemer; and leave the other to play a more thrustful game further upfield.

However, whether an inside forward is a goal-getter or a goal-schemer, he must still be a clever ball player. The fast straight running type are rarely successful at inside forward.

Never forget that *all inside forwards* have to act speedily. They must be able to bring the ball down quickly at any height and from any angle. They are so often crowded—particularly in the opposing penalty area—that they must be capable of beating a man in a very small space.

And as they so often get the ball in a confined space, they must be trigger-quick in shooting. It is not often they have a chance to take a long swing at the ball.

It is a question of: here's an opening. Then " Bang " . . . a shot for goal. From the very nature of the job the inside forward, like the centre-forward, should be two-footed. We all know that every player should be two-footed. He should practice until he is.

But it is possible for a winger to be a fairly useful player even though he's very one-footed. Move him inside and he is lost for the inside man must be able to work the ball with both feet and certainly it is absolutely

vital that he should be capable of passing the ball with either foot.

To sum up here are a few of the qualities expected from a first-class inside forward:

1—Complete mastery of the ball and an ability to trap it speedily no matter from which direction it comes.

2—The skill to juggle with the ball and beat an opponent with a body swerve or sleight-of-foot movement in a very small space.

3—The football brain to launch an attack; and the unorthodoxy to switch the point of attack at any time in a game. It all adds up to what we call in soccer: "The schemer."

4—Unlimited stamina to forage for the ball, even when your team is under heavy pressure.

5—The judgment to pass a ball with slide-rule accuracy, whether the ball is going forty yards or only four!

6—The speed of thought and action, which enables a player to take the half-chance at goal.

7—Quick and accurate shooting ability, plus the power to resist the strongest tackles.

The list could be extended much more than this. But there is sufficient here to show that it takes a chap of extraordinary ability to be a first-class inside forward. He must be one of the best, if not the best footballer in the team.

CHAPTER XV

Three moves for inside forwards to study. How to link up with the wing-man in taking the ball upfield. How to join in a short passing move with the other inside forward from a throw-in. And the scissors move.

ONE of the worst failings of the young inside forward, is that he either runs too far with the ball, or else parts with it too quickly.

First-class inside forwards almost invariably run towards the man in possession of the ball. He only runs away from him when he is a decoy pulling the defence out of position.

How often do you see the inexperienced inside forward carrying the ball on a long run upfield; no one comes to tackle him, and the whole defence funnels back into their own penalty area until everyone is covered?

It is in situations like these that the player shows his inexperience by trying to lob the ball over the full-back's head to his winger. If the full-back knows his job, he has time to turn round while the ball is in the air, and still beat the winger to it.

If the inside forward finds he is running on unchallenged he should try to find a team mate with a quick pass and then run for the return, gradually working the ball upfield in this way until an opening is created.

Let's have a look at this problem in simple terms. Look at diagram A. We are assuming that the inside forward has the ball. He is going to be challenged by the

wing-half, and his own wing-man is covered by the full-back.

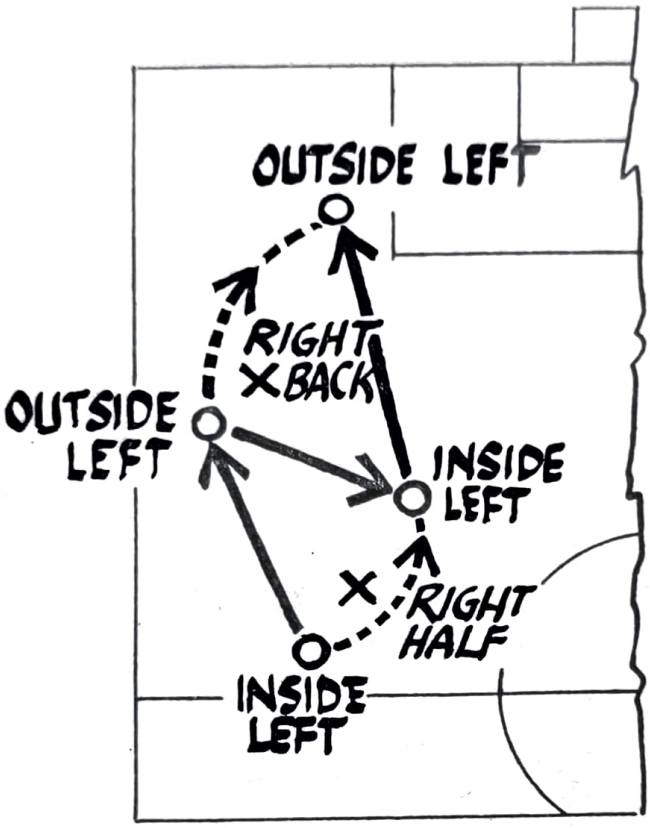


Diagram A: HOW THE INSIDE MAN SHOULD PLAY WITH HIS WINGER.
A: By passing and running into position like this you can get the wing-half and the full-back on the turn without unnecessary dribbling. It is all a question of short, sharp, accurate passing.

The winger should be turned facing the ball. Now then the inside-left can pass the ball straight to the winger's feet. As soon as the ball is on its way, the inside-left should dart quickly past the wing-half. That's one man momentarily beaten.

The winger can now give a swift return pass into that open space and the full-back is left covering two men—the winger and the inside-forward.

The inside-left can feint to carry on with the ball and, as the full-back is caught in two minds, the ball can

be pushed past him. The winger must watch for off-side . . . but he can be in full running stride to pick up the ball as it is pushed past the full-back who is trying to turn.

See how simple it can be, if you have this sort of understanding.

Now look at diagram B with the players in exactly

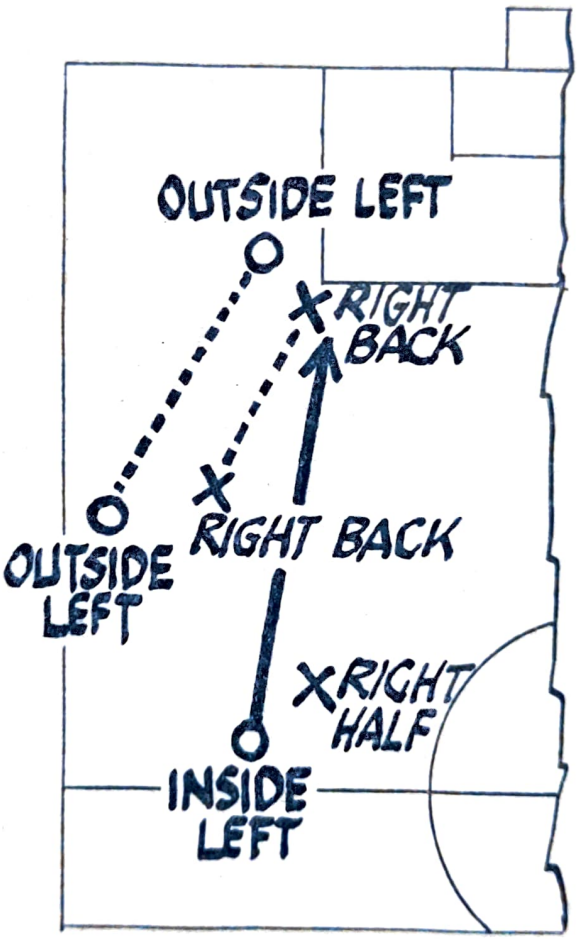


Diagram B: AND THE WRONG WAY TO PLAY WITH THE WINGER.

B: In top class football you won't make many openings like this. See the inside man has got rid of the ball too quickly without trying to draw an opponent out of position. The full-back can anticipate the pass . . . in fact he has a better chance of turning and getting to it before the winger. This is just kicking possession of the ball away for the winger would need to be a greyhound to catch this pass.

TRAPPING WITH THE OUTSIDE OF THE FOOT

This is a good way of killing a ball if you cannot do it any other way. The ball is trapped by the outside of the foot, and taken along in the same movement. The danger so far as a winger is concerned, is that he will often be swept off his feet by the back as he comes in to tackle. Trapping in this manner is a must for all players. It is especially useful for inside-forwards who can move to right or left with equal ease. On the touchline a winger will often find himself hemmed in, and he may run into trouble

THE MID-AIR TRAP

This is a way of killing a ball used by all great Soccer stylists. It means a player can bring the ball down much quicker under control than if he waited for the ball to drop of its own accord. Only constant practice can make a player efficient in this. The ball is really caught in mid air by the foot and gently coaxed down to the ground—ball and foot coming down in unison

CHEST IT DOWN

Ever been faced with a high ball which is too low to head: and too high to bring down with your foot? Right, cushion it down your chest like this. The head is right over the ball and the body bent at the hips so that it rolls down to your waiting feet

the same positions. The inside-left hasn't bothered to pull the wing-half to him. He has got rid of the ball as though it was a hot cake. The full-back, who has a clear view of the situation, can turn and get to the ball before the winger, because he has the time to anticipate the pass.

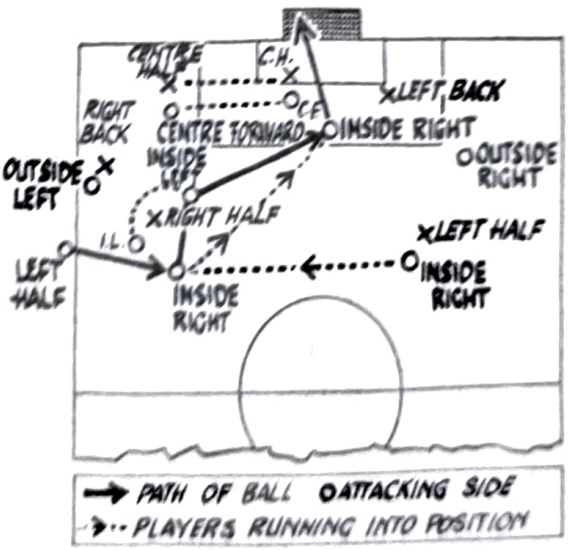
It is no good kicking the ball past defenders like this, and leaving your pals to chase it. Remember you must get that full-back facing two men, so that he does not know which one to tackle.

The move in the diagram is one Preston almost scored from, in the 1954 Cup Final. Our inside forwards Jimmy Baxter and Bobby Foster worked a quick short passing move on these lines . . . but at the last moment Jimmy Baxter was crowded out, and his shot just skimmed the bar.

A close understanding with his wing man is an absolute MUST for the inside forward. Now let us see how he should link up with his inside partner.

This, basically, is the move. There is a throw-in about twenty yards away from the corner flag.

The left-half feints to give the orthodox throw to the



Inter-passing move by inside forwards from a throw-in.

inside-left. As he does so the inside-right makes a sudden dart from the other side of the field and the ball is thrown to his feet while he is still unmarked. The inside-right pushes it past the opposing right-half who is covering the inside-left.

The inside-left runs past him into an open space and he is now in position to receive the ball from the inside-right. Remember all this is done quickly so that the right-half is in the position of not knowing whether to turn and run with the inside-left or whether to tackle the inside-right who has the ball.

In this case I am showing the inside-left running on to take the pass. Now we have both inside forwards momentarily in the clear.

The centre-forward has already moved out of the middle, taking the centre-half with him, when the throw-in was about to be taken. There is a gap and, as I've shown here, it is frequently possible to get a shot at goal before the left-half and left-back can get across to cover the middle.

The move obviously depends to a very large extent on whether the centre-half can be pulled out of the middle. Even if he is not the important thing to remember is this: the inside forwards have created an opening; they are in possession of the ball and in a position like this any manner of moves are possible.

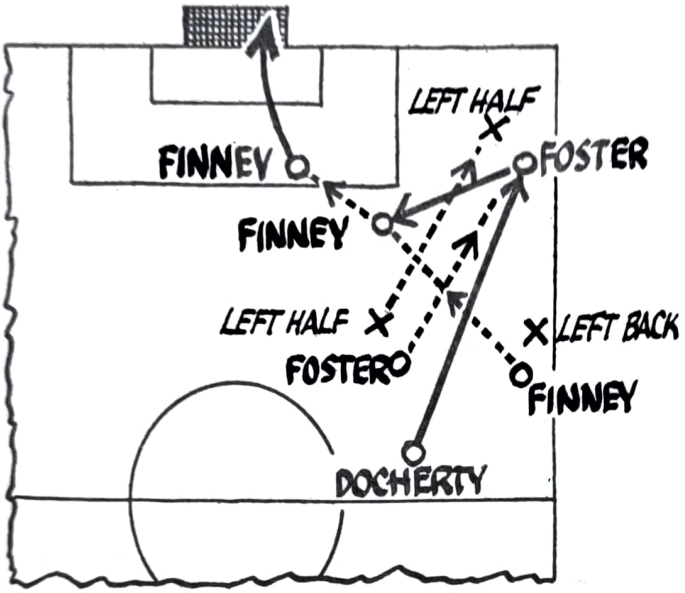
I think you will see for yourselves how important it is for inside forwards to link up in this way.

They have been working the scissors move in soccer for years and years . . . and it is still a winner. There are all sorts of variations on what is, after all, a quick switching of positions by the inside forward and his winger.

In the diagram on the next page you'll see one of the many we work at Preston.

If I find I am being policed by the opposing left-back

I frequently come deep to try and throw him off. If the left-back still follows me I go deeper still, until I can pull him over the half-way line. The left-back is then out of the game to all intents and purposes and a long through ball can be pushed down the right touchline to Bobby Foster, the Preston inside-right, who is now in what you might call an advanced outside-right position.



Here's how you work the scissors move with your winger.

Now let us study this move more closely. Tommy Doherty has the ball and I come towards him as though it is going to be passed to me. At the same moment, Bobby Foster makes a dart towards the touchline, some fifteen to twenty yards further on.

As the left-back has followed me Tommy Doherty does not give me the ball at all, but pushes it straight through to Bobby Foster.

When I see that happen, I turn and sprint quickly into an inside-right position before the left-back can turn. Once I am past the back in this manner he should not be able to catch me (remember he has to turn before

he can start running) and I can gather a reverse pass from Foster while I'm in full stride.

It won't work all the time for obvious reasons . . . but it is yet another example of how a quick thinking inside forward can make it easy for his team mates. He should be chasing, working hard and scheming like this all through the game.

CHAPTER XVI

The winger has a key part to play because the centre of the field is so congested in modern football. Never be afraid of stopping the ball if you think you can use it better by waiting instead of trying a greyhound dash. The accurate pass is better than the high speculative lob into the goalmouth. Never shoot if another member of your team is better placed . . . and a few hints on how to improve your wing play.

I BELIEVE that wing-men have a key role to play in modern football. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find openings through the middle, and more and more football teams are relying on their wing-men to create openings for the rest of the forwards.

It is an old axiom in football: *"Keep the middle of the goal covered and they can't score."*

Thus, as time has gone on, the whole emphasis of defensive play has been to police the centre of the goal area and at the same time to try and force the wing-men to stay out on the touchline. For these reasons I believe that wingers need to do a little more than merely race madly down the touchline and lob the ball into the middle.

I know that some teams used to favour this method, and the football crowds didn't help either. As soon as a winger had the ball he was urged to: *"Sling it in the middle." . . . "Get it into the goalmouth."*

I ask you, what is the use of cracking a high ball into the goalmouth if the centre-forward is covered, if the inside men are blocked by the wing-halves, and the

goalkeeper is a free agent aready to grab the ball if it comes too near his goal?

No, we want more from our wingers than sheer speed. A winger has to use his brains to create openings. He is not so often in the game as the inside forwards and the wing-halves, but when he does receive the ball he should be used as a spearhead of an attack.

In team building, most managers like to have one winger as a fast direct goal-scoring raider and the other with a little more finesse and craft.

I do not suggest that one has to bludgeon his way through and that the other should be a pretty player without a shot. After all, one of the cleverest wingers in English League football is Bobby Mitchell of Newcastle United . . . and he has a terrific shot.

The point I wish to emphasise is that a team should have variety about the attack—and it helps if you have wingers of contrasting styles.

The trouble with most wing-men is, I suppose, that they either hug the touchline (i.e. they prefer to go *outside the full-back* and down the touchline with the ball) or else they cut in *inside the full-back* every time.

The winger who can only go one way should be easily blocked by an experienced full-back. Therefore the first aim of every young winger should be to develop his footwork so that he can go outside or come inside the full-back with equal ease.

In my own case, I was perhaps rather lucky. I started my career as an inside-left and I was a natural left-footed player. One day, when Preston reserve team were short of a right winger, I was given the vacant place. It worked—and I have been a right winger ever since.

The result is that I now use my left foot a great deal on the right wing. It makes it easier for me if I want to come inside the full-back, and it also means I have my body between an opponent and the ball.

For instance, suppose Tommy Docherty, Preston's right-half, slips a low ground pass to me. I can gather it with my left foot and I am in such a position that my back is half turned on the full-back who is coming in to tackle. He cannot get at the ball and I can start to move infield, still with the ball on my left foot.

If the full-back comes across to try and get in front of me I can cut the ball back towards the touchline with my left foot and gather it with my right. I can also, if I want, push it back to Docherty with my left foot and run past the full-back for a return pass.

In other words I do a lot of things the wrong way round to the orthodox right-winger who will of course be gathering and dribbling the ball with his right foot in full view of the back all the time.

However, I'll leave the tricks of the trade for a moment and concentrate on how the winger should try to use the ball. First of all, I advocate all wingers to go deep into their own half for the ball. By doing this they set the opposing full-back this problem: should he follow the winger so far or should he stay in his own half of the field?

If the full-back does follow the winger (as we saw in the diagram in the previous chapter) it creates defensive problems for his team.

Very often I go back thirty yards into my own half to pick up the ball from a clearance. This helps a hard-pressed defence and it means the winger can start an attack.

The natural tendency of most young wingers is to bang the ball into the middle as quickly as possible. All he is really doing is, of course, getting rid of his responsibilities. He thinks because he has hit the ball over that he has done his job and that he cannot be blamed if no goal is scored from his pass.

In fact, the wing-man should be as precise in his

passing as the inside forwards and wing-halves. When Stan Matthews gets a ball his sole aim is to try and pull as many defenders as possible out of the middle before he rolls the ball back to one of his colleagues.

Remember how Matthews made that last glorious opening which won the Cup for Blackpool in 1953? He made one of his brilliant runs, moving in on the Bolton goal until he was in such a position that Malcolm Barrass, the Bolton centre-half, had to come out of the middle to try and block his centre.

Then, and only then, did Matthews gently cut the ball back for Bill Perry, who was unmarked, to score.

Make a note of that point: *he rolled the ball back.*

I always try to use the same sort of pass. It means that none of your team mates can be off-side if you cut the ball back from the bye-line.

There is nothing more difficult for a goalkeeper than trying to cover his goal when at the last moment the ball is clipped back for another chap to have a running drive at goal.

I also like to cut in for goal, beat the back, and still take the ball on. If I see the goalkeeper covering the near post the obvious move is to either roll the ball back for the inside forward following up fast or else to centre the ball *away from the goal* towards the far post for the left winger to try a header as he comes running in.

It often happens that a goalkeeper watching for these passes allows his attention to be distracted slightly. He tends to watch the men off the ball, instead of the ball itself. In moments like these I bring the ball back on to my left foot and have a crack at goal.

Why shoot with my left foot? Think for a moment. The right winger, at an acute angle, can rarely squeeze the ball between the goalkeeper and the post. By bringing the ball on to the left foot I immediately widen the angle—there is a much larger area of goal to shoot at

—and if no one else is in a better position then the winger is quite entitled to try a shot himself.

The essential point to remember is that a winger needs to be fairly close in (ten to fifteen yards) to have any chance with a cross drive. Even though he is clear of opponents he should rarely shoot if one of his team mates is on-side, unmarked and better placed in front of goal.

That business of racing in for goal and trying terrific drives is a major weakness of most inexperienced wingers. If you study the game closely you will find that wingers can and do score a lot of goals, but almost invariably they score either when they have switched positions quickly so that they are directly in front of goal, or else they score with a snappy header or shot when the ball has been whipped over from the opposite wing and they are running in to meet the ball at speed.

Now let us see how our young wing-man should set about beating the full-back. The first thing to remember is that the wing-man's tricks are governed by the touchline. If he is right on the line then he can only come inside the back, otherwise he will run the ball out of play.

The best advice I think is: *never be afraid of stopping the ball.*

So many people urge the young winger: "You must make ground quickly." So he should—but what's the use of gathering a ball and moving off with it at speed only to run straight into the full-back with it.

Watch how Stan Matthews does it. Stan likes the ball put straight to his feet. He stops it. The full-back is eyeing him warily; he dare not rush into the tackle otherwise Stan would pull the ball back and be away past him.

Put yourself in the position of Matthews. You are facing infield with the ball at your feet. What are you

going to do with it? Well, there is only one Matthews so you won't be able to do what he does! He will take the ball right up to the back . . . and you know the rest. But you can hold that ball until a team mate runs into an open space. You give him the ball, run past the full-back, and take the return. That's the easy way to get past the back.

If you have the time and the room you can try beating him yourself with the ball. The important thing is to try and find which is the full-back's favourite foot and whether he is suspect when you come inside, or outside him with the ball?

Sometimes it is possible to kick the ball past him and run for it. This is hardly the classical method, and besides it is too easy for another defender to come across and get the ball.

The class winger tries to send his man the wrong way with a body swerve or feint. You must try to win the battle of wits early in the game, so that the full-back can never be sure what you are going to do next. If he is uncertain whether to come in quickly for the tackle or hold off and let you bring the ball to him, then you are half-way to winning the battle.

But do not forget, if you are a right winger cutting in for goal, try dribbling the ball with your left foot so that you protect the ball with your body. If you are a left winger, then use the right foot when you cut in for goal.

It is quite impossible to detail all the various tricks, but in an earlier chapter I did explain how Stan Matthews beats his man and also how I do it. From these hints you will no doubt be able to perfect tricks of your own.

So far as I am concerned it does not matter a great deal how a winger gets past the full-back so long as he beats his man cleanly while still retaining possession

of the ball. What does matter is: *how does the winger use the ball?*

No more high hopeful centres from the touchline please. Whether you beat the full-back on the inside or outside, once past him you should be moving in quickly for goal to do one of these three things:

1. Cut the ball back along the ground for a team mate running in at speed.

2. Centre away from goal for the winger on the other side of the field to run on to.

3. Try a shot yourself . . . but only if there is no one else in a better position.

One last word. Speed is essential on the wing, but that does not mean to say you must run at sprinting speed with the ball all the time. Take a tip from Stan Matthews. He often *walks* up to the full-back with the ball. He will stop and wait with it . . . but watch his acceleration going past the back. . . . That's the time when the winger needs his speed.

Here are a few tips for wingers.

1. In training get your goalkeeper to throw the ball out to you on the touchline. If you are a right winger, try gathering it with your left foot and sweep it on in the same movement on to your right foot. You would do this in a match if you were unmarked with a chance of a quick breakaway.

2. Now try gathering it with your left foot, and move infield at the same time with *your back* to the *full-back*. When you have gone for a few yards in this direction see if you can turn sharply and move out to the

touchline again, keeping the ball under close control.

3. Practise this move with the other winger. Run in quickly for goal, feint to shoot, then crack the ball over to your team mate so that he can head it on the run. Many a goal has been scored with this crossfield pass from one winger to the other.

4. You can vary this tactic by hitting a low ball in the same way that Johnny Hancocks and Jimmy Mullen of Wolves do. Both these wingers have a terrific shot, and they use the crossfield pass with deadly effect.

5. Practise taking corners with both feet. The most awkward corner for a goalkeeper to handle is the outswinger moving away from goal. You can try the inswinger if the goalkeeper seems suspect when moving in to gather a ball dropping in by the near post. Aim to place your corners about the penalty spot . . . and with constant practice you'll be able to place them within a yard or two where you want them to be.

6. In taking corners keep your eye on the ball all the time, get the instep of the non-kicking foot level with the ball, and when you make contact . . . *kick right through the ball.* Balance and timing is the secret of taking good corners. It is far better to take a poor outswinging corner than a "near" inswinger which puts the ball out of play for a bye-kick.

7. Practise triangular moves with your wing-half and inside forward. Get them to roll the ball to you at first. Later on let them lob the ball on to your chest and head, then see how quickly you can bring the ball down and move off with it.

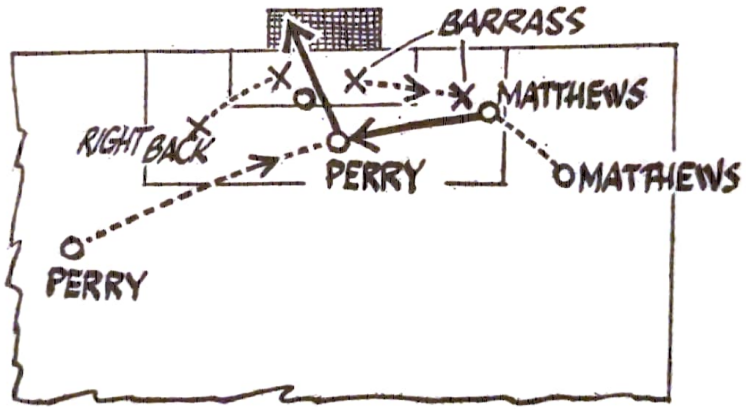
8. Remember that a lot of a winger's strategy depends on sudden stops and rapid accelerations. A lot of your training should be based on this, particularly on sprint starts in running spikes.

CHAPTER XVII

How a wing-man should part with the ball—moves that lead to goals—different ways of taking a corner.

I HAVE already indicated that every wing-man should cut in for goal once he has beaten the back. The object in so doing is to pull at least one more defender out of the middle, thus leaving one of your team mates unmarked in front of goal.

It is absolutely fatal to run straight for the corner-flag and send over a high centre, without drawing someone out of the crowded goalmouth. I know there



This is how Stan Matthews works the ball in to goal, forcing the centre-half to come across to tackle him.

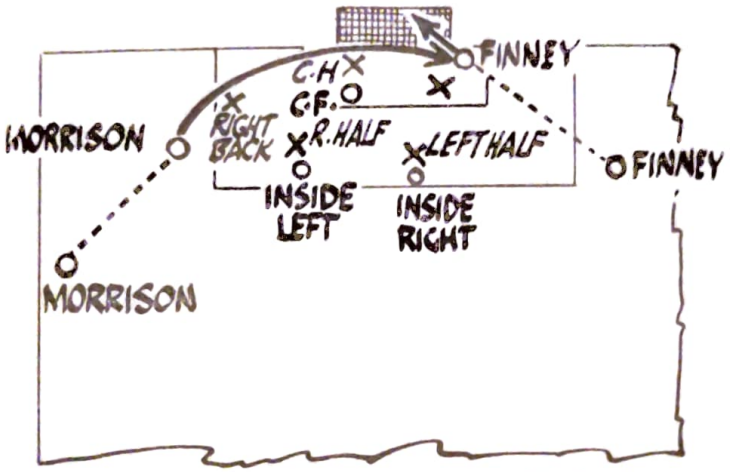
are cases—particularly in a rapid breakaway—where the winger can cross the ball *quickly* from the touch-line to a team mate who is in a position to score.

However, in most circumstances, it is absolutely vital for the winger to come in for goal, the angle at which he attacks the goal depending on the disposition of the defenders.

Take a look at the first diagram on the opposite page and you will see how to part with the ball. Remember that 1953 Cup Final when a run by Stan Matthews brought the winning goal for Blackpool in the last two minutes of the match?

I am not going into details of Stan's wonder run—because he is a law unto himself in that respect. But note how he used the ball. No silly cross shot at goal, which would have probably ended in the side netting . . . but a gently placed pass.

He took the ball on until he had forced Malcolm



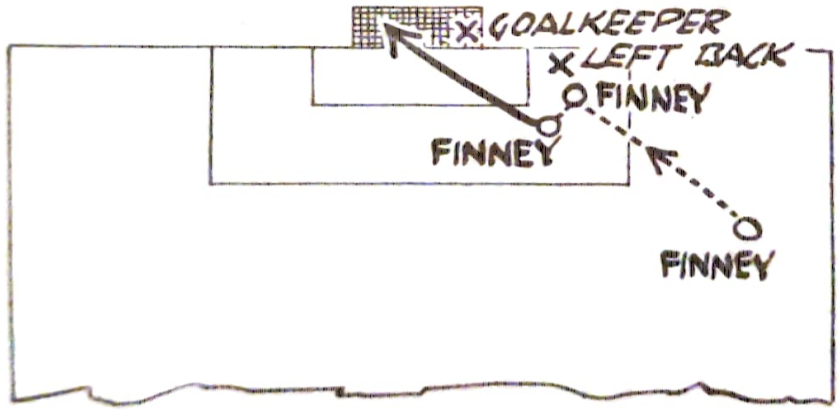
Everyone covered—so this time a well placed centre for the right winger to meet on the run

Barrass to run across to try and block his centre. As soon as Barrass was on his way, Stan clipped the ball into the middle. Stan Mortensen was covered, but Billy Perry was in the clear behind Mortensen. He received the ball . . . and it was a goal all the way. Cool thinking and an accurate pass by Matthews did the trick.

In the diagram above I am showing another way for the winger to part with the ball. In this case if the middle is blocked a swift centre beyond the far post is the answer. This is ready made for the other winger, so that he can come running in on the "blind" side of the full-back to have a shot or try a header for goal.

As a matter of fact, I was able to head an equalising goal for Preston against Newcastle two years ago with this move. Angus Morrison, our left winger, saw that Charlie Wayman, our centre-forward, was closely marked. There was a mêlée of players in the goal-mouth and the goalkeeper was positioned by the near post in order to narrow the angle for a cross shot. Angus, seeing that I was running in from the right wing, whipped over a high centre . . . and I came behind the full-back at speed to head it in.

In this diagram I am illustrating one way of trying an unorthodox cross shot for goal. All wingers have their own individual style. In my case I feint as though I am going right to the bye-line with the ball, then at the last moment I draw the ball *back* on to my left foot, and if you study the diagram you will see it opens up a much wider angle of goal to shoot at.



See the goalkeeper by the near post. In an incident like this I sometimes bring the ball back to my LEFT FOOT—this widens the angle

In taking corners the winger must use some imagination and new ideas. One of the best is the short corner. There are many variations. For instance, Tottenham Hotspur frequently use a hard low corner, driven into an open space. If it is on the right wing, the left winger runs across at the last moment. The ball is intended for

PUSH FOR A PERFECT PASS

The most accurate pass of all is this one, simply because the whole side of the foot is used to push the ball to a team mate. This is the pass most half backs use as they push the ball forward to set an attack going. Far better than a tentative toe-ender isn't it? Note the position: Eyes firmly fixed on the ball, body leaning slightly back; arms held out to maintain balance

GATHERING THE BALL ON THE RUN

This is how you kill a ball with the inside of the foot and take it on without stopping. As I am a left footer, I can take most of my passes on the right wing in this manner. I sweep the ball along with my left foot on to the right, and I am in full stride without pausing. The important thing is to keep your eyes firmly focussed on the ball, until you really have it under control. That body lean and balance comes naturally with lots of practice

On the Preston ground at Deepdale with my young son, Brian

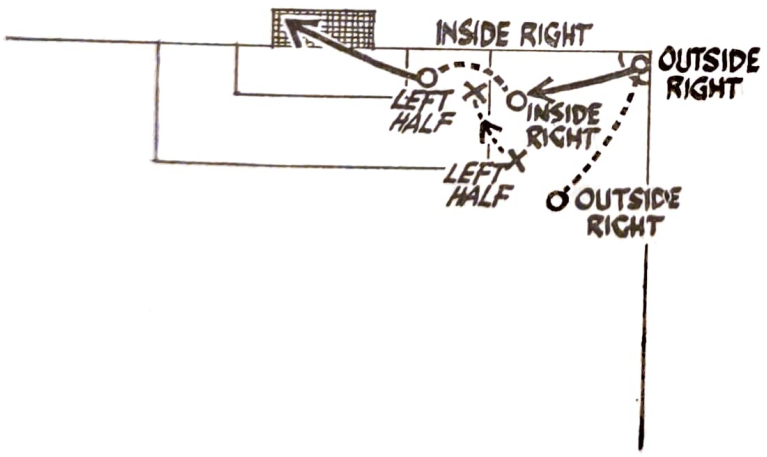
I always believe in chatting to and advising youngsters who are keen on the game. There might easily be a future International player among them—a boy who needs inspiration—and I remember that I was once considered too small to make the grade

him . . . and he is often able to get a swift deflection shot in on the half-turn.

The other method is for the winger to place the ball as though about to take the orthodox long corner into the goalmouth. Again, at the last moment, his inside partner runs out of the crowded goalmouth. The ball is flicked low to him, he turns it infield, and the winger can run on and work the ball into the goal either for a shot or a pass at a much wider angle.

In the diagram at the foot of the page I illustrate a variation of this move, which we frequently use at Preston. The ball is tapped to the inside man. The winger runs inside as though about to take the return pass. By this time the inside forward is covered by a defender.

The defender, fearing that the ball will be passed to the winger, will often race to try and intercept the pass. This now makes it possible for the inside forward to back-heel the ball, turn round and work in along the bye-line.



Short corner to inside-right, who doubles back in his tracks with the ball as the left-half runs to take the right winger.

CHAPTER XVIII

A centre-forward is generally "born and not made." He must be above all else a quick thinker. He must do everything he can to pull the centre-half out of the middle of the field . . . and yet he must have the speed to be in the goalmouth to take advantage of the half chances.

CENTRE-FORWARD sounds an exciting position to play, which is no doubt why many young boys rush to take on that job. But it can also be a very heart-breaking task.

The centre-forward is the most closely marked man on the field (except of course for Stan Matthews in big soccer!). So you see a centre-forward must be a quick thinker, he must be strong, even if he is not very powerfully built. I would say most centre-forwards are "born and not made."

There was a time when the centre-forward was the spearhead, and like most spearheads he stayed in the middle of the field waiting for the ball to come to him. No centre-forward can afford to play like that in these days of the stopper centre-half. Scoring goals is only half the job. The centre-forward must seek by all the means in his power to pull that policeman centre-half out of the middle of the field.

I suppose before the off-side law was altered, the centre-forward must have had greater freedom than he has now. Before the law was changed most soccer teams had an attacking centre-half, so obviously there would be brief periods in the game when the centre-forward

would have no one marking him closely—although he most certainly would not have a clear field to operate in.

However, once that law was altered back came the centre-half on to the eighteen yard line and he was told to stick close to the centre-forward all through the game. That still holds good today. The problem in British football is: how are we going to get past this stumbling block of a stopper centre-half?

The latest answer—and at the moment it appears to be a successful one—is the withdrawn centre-forward (i.e. the leader of the attack plays deep behind the other four forwards). This plan was operated by Hungary when they played in England. The man who did all the scheming, was their deep-lying centre-forward Hidgekuti. In English football Manchester City are operating this new strategy with Don Revie as their wandering centre-forward.

However, before we discuss this new plan in more detail let us consider the various styles of centre-forward play, and just what is required from a leader of the attack.

We have the fast forceful leaders like Nat Lofthouse, Stan Mortensen, and, before the war, Jack Dodds and Ted Drake. These chaps are clever footballers, but they follow the old-time pattern of the centre-forward being the orthodox attack leader scoring goals. Any team which possesses a centre-forward of this type is lucky. The policy of the team should be to play to him, scheming the openings . . . and he will complete the job by putting the ball into the net.

The requirements of this style of play are: terrific speed, absolute fearlessness in going in hard for the half chances, a robust frame to stand up to all the hard knocks, a hard and accurate shot in either foot, and also above-average heading ability.

England has been fortunate in these post-war years in producing two men of this calibre in Nat Lofthouse and Stan Mortensen.

"Lofty," as we call him, is a superb header. Any ball dropping in the goal area is likely to be flashed into the net by him. He is also fast—and he has not been nicknamed "lionhearted" for nothing.

"Morty," not so powerfully built as Lofthouse, was quickly called "electric heels" because of his electrifying dart through the middle. Both these players are good footballers too. They can knit a forward line together and they have the tactical sense to move out of the middle to make openings for their colleagues. But it is their deadly accuracy in scoring goals which makes them such a menace to other teams.

Let me give you examples of what I mean. In the 1953 Cup Final Nat Lofthouse scored in the first two minutes by sheer optimism. He was covered by Harry Johnston, the Blackpool captain. There was the possibility that Willie Moir, the Bolton inside-right, might be off-side if the ball had been pushed through to him. So in a split second, Nat, from fully twenty-five yards range, decided to take a lightning shot at goal before Johnston could come right across him and block his shot. The ball dipped and sailed inside the post. A good goal, the product of quick thinking by the centre-forward.

In the same game we saw the Mortensen brand of quick thinking. A free-kick just outside the Bolton penalty area called for the orthodox chip over the packed defence. As he placed the ball "Morty" saw a slight opening. He put the ball down and crashed the ball into the roof of the net before Stan Hanson in the Bolton goal could move. As I said before, when you have a match-winning centre-forward like that in the team the other players must "feed" him. They must be

planning attacks which leaves these chaps racing through on to the ball, or else the accurate centre which can be flashed into the net with an acrobatic header.

Tommy Lawton, England's No. 1 centre-forward during and just after World War II, is what you would call a footballing centre-forward. He moves well on the ball, he can drop back and play like an inside forward, he had in the England line-up a wonderful understanding and triangular link-up with his inside forwards Raich Carter and Wilf Mannion . . . and, of course, Lawton is an absolute master in the air. I suppose, looking at the problem technically, he is the finest all-round centre-forward of my time.

Do not, however, run away with the idea that the centre-forward must necessarily be big and powerful. It is a great asset if the attack leader is built on " block-buster " lines . . . always providing he has the most vital asset of all . . . quick thinking.

Yes, I know you hear many people saying: " Let's have my centre-forward a big chap good in the air." All very nice. But to the smaller chaps who aspire to play centre-forward I say. " Remember Charlie Wayman and Ronnie Allen?"

Now here we have centre-forwards who rely on quick thinking to solve their soccer problems. Charlie Wayman, my old Preston colleague, is only 5ft. 4in., but there has been no more consistent goal-getter in English League football since the war. How does he do it? By quick thinking and a football brain.

Charlie doesn't wait for the ball to come to him. He goes wandering out on to the wings, he is a neat player, and has a wonderful left foot. No centre-half can allow him to roam at will because Charlie is quite capable of holding on to the ball and going through on his own to score.

By wandering so much he upsets the centre-half's

peace of mind. It's all very well saying: "Let him wander, he must come back into the middle sometime" . . . But what team can allow Wayman to wander around in search of the ball unchallenged? It is this plus the positional sense to get him in the right place at the right time, which has brought Charlie so many of his goals.

Ronnie Allen was the first English footballer to employ the deep-lying centre-forward style of play. Originally a right winger, he is very fast so he was detailed to play *behind the other four forwards*. As soon as he had the ball, he whipped it through the middle—and sure enough there was one of his West Brom. team mates running on for the through ball.

Allen's speed could also get him into position in the goalmouth many times when he was least expected to be there.

However, when you analyse all these various centre-forwards—Lofthouse, Lawton, Mortensen, Tommy Taylor of Manchester United, Charlie Wayman and Ronnie Allen, they all have one thing in common, they think quickly and they act quickly. The whole art of centre-forward play is to practice and remember to practice hitting and heading the ball at speed.

In training, the centre-forward should get his winger to push the ball through to him. Let him run on and hit that ball with either foot from all angles and all distances. Then he must try hitting the bouncing ball at hip height until he can be certain of cracking it into the net. So often in match play the ball bounces awkwardly and the centre-forward of all people must be able to shoot low and swiftly into the net. In heading the ball, he should always try to position himself so that he is running on to the ball, and thus be able to glide it into the net. Most of his headers will also be headed down and away from the goalkeeper.

This now brings us to the controversial topic of the withdrawn centre-forward game as operated by Don Revie of Manchester City.

Don has carried Ronnie Allen's style of play a stage further. Instead of playing about ten yards behind the other forwards, Revie often goes back into his own penalty area for the ball. No one pretends he is as deadly a finisher as Lofthouse, Lawton or Mortensen, but what he has got is remarkable stamina and a wonderful sense of timing his passes.

He is virtually an inside forward, but by playing so deep and wandering all over the field he is setting the opposing team a problem. Should the stopper centre-half follow him and so open up the middle of the field with a resultant emphasis on attacking football by both teams? Or should that centre-half stay at home and be faced by a fluid forward movement as Revie's slide-rule passes switch the point of play first one way then the other?

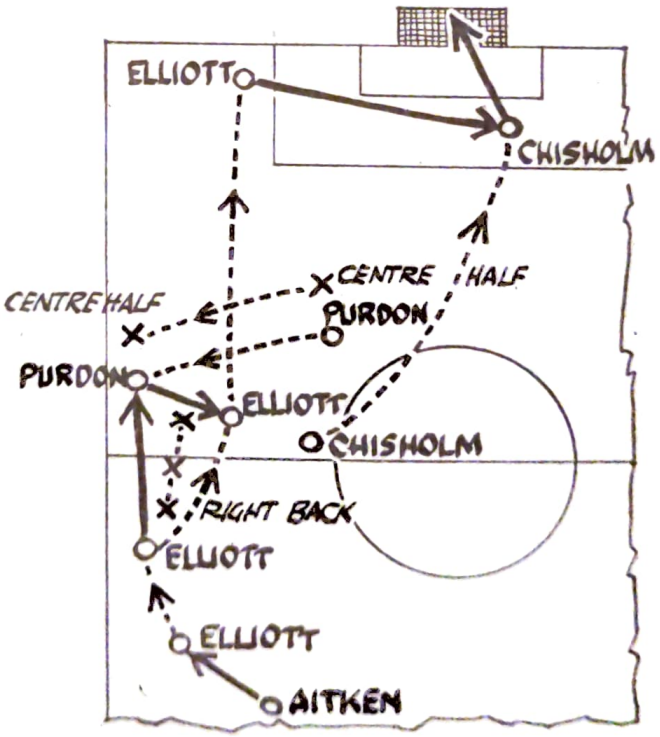
I don't think we have seen the last of this plan by any means. All footballers are following it with interest, in the hope that at long last it will lift our game out of the defensive morass where it has been bogged down for too long.

I have deliberately mentioned Revie and Hidgekuti in this chapter, although I would not advise any young centre-forward to adopt their style unless they are schemers and can place a ball accurately. After all, whether the centre-forward plays deep or not a team still needs a spearhead at the crisis of a move to put the ball into the net. By fluid movements it may well be that a winger or inside forward moves into the middle to finish off the schemes of the Revie type of centre-forward, but it is still as true as ever that all teams need a quick mover and quick finisher in the goalmouth.

CHAPTER XIX

Analysing the style of centre-forwards

WE have been talking about centre-forwards moving out on to the wing and those who move up and downfield. Well here in the first diagram is a simple move with the centre-forward moving out on to the touchline. Sunderland scored with this at Preston in last season's Cup-ties. It was so simple I could hardly believe the ball was in the back of the net!

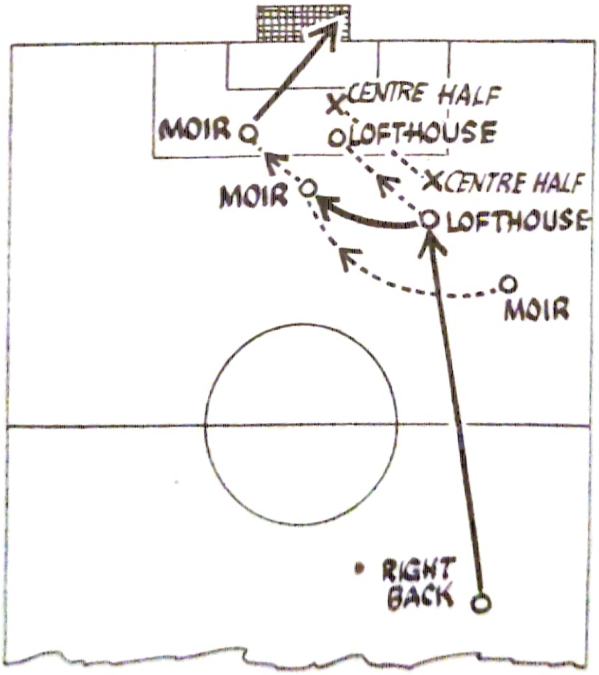


Centre-forward Purdon moves on to the wing to link up with his outside-left, Elliott.

Preston had been attacking on the right wing. The move broke down and Billy Elliott, the Sunderland left

winger, who was some twenty yards in his own half, was in position to receive the clearance kick. The Preston goal was some seventy yards away, so who could anticipate danger? Before our defence could cover up this happened.

Ted Purdon the Sunderland centre-forward, instead of waiting for Elliott to make ground, ran out to the left touchline. Elliott slipped the ball to him. Preston's centre-half, Joe Marston, obviously had to follow Purdon, but before he could tackle Elliott had come racing up. Purdon tapped the ball inside to him and Billy was away like a shot, veering in for goal all the time. As he approached the bye-line he could see that Len Chisholm, the Sunderland inside-left, had switched to an inside-right position and that he was running



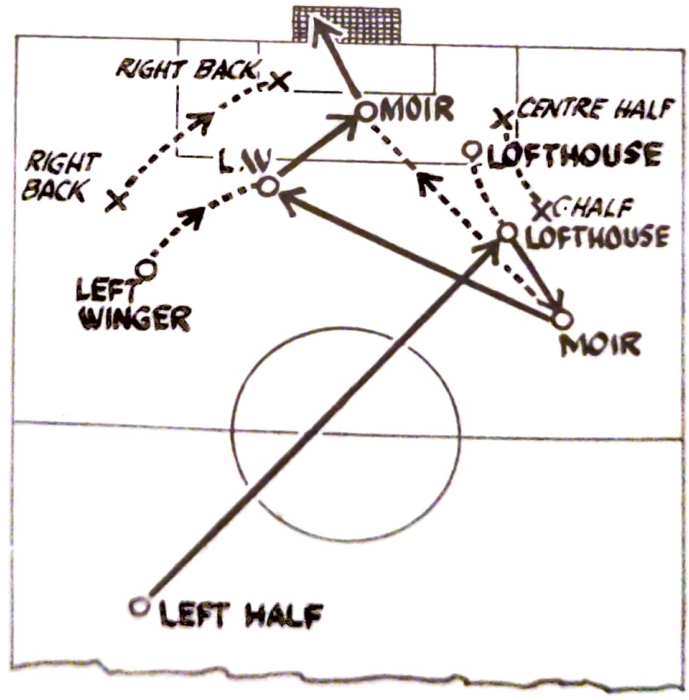
Lofthouse runs out of the middle, the centre-half follows. The ball is lobbed on to the head of Lofthouse who glides it through the middle . . . straight to Willie Moir who has now taken up the centre-forward position.

through at speed. Elliott clipped the ball hard and true to him . . . and Chisholm did the rest.

Purdon did one thing—and one thing only. He kicked the ball to Elliott. But it was his quick thinking in linking up with Elliott which produced the goal. It would have been impossible for Elliott to have run all that way with the ball without our defence challenging him and thus covering up the middle.

Another way of linking up the line is shown in the diagram overleaf. This is how Nat Lofthouse does it. Nat, superb in the air, is obviously a very much marked man. If he finds he is being crowded out he will run towards his own goal. The Bolton full-backs or half-backs clip a high ball through the middle to Nat. While on its way, Harold Hassall or Willie Moir run past him and Nat gently and accurately glides the ball down to their feet and they go racing through.

Bolton had a variation of this move against Wolves,

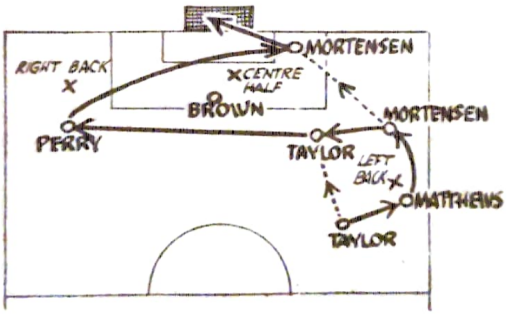


Variation of the Bolton move which brings the left-winger into play . . . but it still depends on Lofthouse being able to pull the centre-half from his position policing the centre of the goalmouth.

as can be seen in the other diagram. Bolton's policy was to try and nullify Billy Wright's powerful covering-up in defence. So Nat moved towards his own goal. Obviously Wright could not leave him unmarked. Again the high ball down the middle, a deft nod by Nat down to the feet of Willie Moir . . . now here's the variation.

With Wright out of the middle the Wolves left-back had moved over to cover him, leaving the left winger, Parry. So Moir repeatedly flung the long crossfield pass to the left winger. Time after time Bolton broke through on this flank. Again a tribute to Nat's unselfish centre-forward play. He couldn't break through himself, but his wonderful heading ability still produced goals for his team.

It is generally a good policy for the centre-forward to be at the far post to receive the long crossfield centres. It does not always pay, but it can be devastating if the



See what happens if the centre-half does not follow the centre-forward. Mortensen joins in a right-wing passing move, waits on-side as the ball is hit over to the left-wing. Perry, Blackpool's left-winger, pretends to pass to his inside partner, Allan Brown, who is standing near the centre-half . . . and then sends high centre wide of the centre-half to Mortensen, who heads in.

centre-forward wanders from the middle, just when everyone thinks he should be there and then pops up at the last moment with a flying header on the "blind" side of the centre-half.

I think you will see what I mean from this move in

the diagram, in which Stan Mortensen scored against Newcastle United.

The move began on the right wing. Taylor to Matthews to Mortensen, a back pass to Taylor and the ball was switched across to Bill Perry, Blackpool's left winger.

Immediately the defence had to move over to meet the new threat, with the centre-half policing the centre of the goal. Where was Morty? Still somewhere on the right touchline.

Perry cut in, pretended to roll the ball back to Brown but instead, seeing " Morty " lurking on the far side of the field, lifted the ball wide and over the centre-half's head. Morty moving in at top speed made an acrobatic dive and that was that.

This is what every centre-forward should try to do. Do not stand shoulder to shoulder with the centre-half. In a crowded penalty area—and we must admit that is frequently the case—the centre-forward should move away from his " policeman." He should be looking for an open space where he can still be a danger. He must make that centre-half come looking for him.

CHAPTER XX

It's Players not Plans who win matches . . . but you must have some form of team strategy. The W formation can be just as effective as the deep-lying centre-forward game perfected by Hungary . . . if you have the right sort of players. Some of the styles of famous teams analysed.

IT must never be forgotten that it is players who win matches not plans. There is no mathematical formula which will bring success on to the soccer fields.

However, no team ever won anything without some plan of campaign. It is quite useless going out hoping for the best and not previously having had some form of tactical talks.

For instance, at Preston we always believe in the old Scottish style of play. Many of our forwards throughout the years have been on the small side so the emphasis has always been on clever ball play and short accurate passing. It is always a source of pride with Prestonians that it was North End who brought the great Alex James into English football . . . and indeed the club has generally been noted for brilliant inside forward play. Quick movers like the O'Donnell brothers, Dougal and Bobbie Beattie.

The Wolves, on the other hand, have for years been famed for non-stop action. In defence they are strong tacklers; the wing-halves rarely carry the ball too far upfield, and they rely on having a quick forward line, every one of them a marksman, and with wingers of the calibre of Mullen, Hancocks (and more recently Smith)

they also are great believers in the hard hit crossfield passes from wing to wing.

The Tottenham Hotspur side in 1949 played really artistic football which was soon nick-named " Push and Run " soccer simply because it was a question of using crisp short passes with everyone backing up to get into an open space ready to give or receive a pass.

So you see most of the big League clubs have evolved a style of play for which they have become justly famous. Throughout the years they have their periods of success and failure. Indeed, if you study the League results you will find that most clubs have a good run of perhaps four to five years followed by a spell of team re-building as some of the players lose that little edge of pace. Manchester United had their golden run immediately after the war. They were followed by Tottenham Hotspur, with the Wolves and Portsmouth always there or thereabouts.

Yet always the same pattern of play is there to be seen whether the club is getting good results or bad.

Well, you may ask, why should the clubs suddenly fall from their old standards? The answer is generally because the key man of the team suffers loss of form—or he is not up to the usual high standards demanded.

This brings me to the important point of this chapter. Every team from the Back Street Wanderers to the glamorous Arsenal has an *inspirer of attacks*. So the first object in every team is for the manager or coach to decide who shall be the organiser-in-chief of attacks. It is the position of this man who will dictate the style or pattern of play.

For example, the Austrians had Ocwirk, a centre-half who was world famous for his brilliant ball play and distribution. Right: *He was the inspirer of their attacks.*

In the case of Blackpool it is their right wing pair of

Matthews and Ernie Taylor which leaves a trail of destruction. Taylor is the feeder, the fetcher and carrier, leaving Matthews as the supreme artist carving the final openings.

But wherever the schemer of the side is the principle is always the same: *you must play to him.*

It is for this reason that in practically every case the schemer of any football team must operate in those wide midfield gaps. Just how you re-arrange the team to make this possible is a problem to be settled by the team manager in consultation with his team.

For instance, although the Austrians had an attacking centre-half in Ocwirk they so re-arranged their team that one man was still playing the role of stopper centre-half. The Austrians revived this style when they built their international team round their brilliant centre-half. He played as a roving half-back or attacking centre-half, whilst No. 3 moves into the centre-back position, and No. 6 adopts the dual function of playing as a full-back when on defence and moving forward when on attack; but there's always a cover at centre back whatever his number.

More and more in football we are seeing this fluid movement about soccer teams and I think this is largely due to the influence of the continentals.

We in Britain allowed ourselves to become a little too orthodox in team formations. To my mind the old W formation, originated by the late Herbert Chapman when he managed Arsenal, is just as effective as the withdrawn centre-forward tactics employed by the Hungarians. The trouble was (and still is) that so many teams copied the Arsenal strategy they cancelled one another's attacking policy out, and thus too many teams became defence conscious.

What people forgot was the very point I made at the

In the case of Manchester City Don Revie was in

fact tried first of all as a deep-lying inside forward—a sort of Alex James—while the rest of the team played on the lines of the old W formation. It didn't work because the forward line was too static.

Once Revie went to centre-forward he was told to wander at will. The two inside forwards worked a twin thrust past the centre-half and the wingers played wide out on the touchlines. In fact, those four forwards were ready to switch positions at any time. This fluid movement plus Revie's skill in passing brought results which previously had not been possible under the old orthodox formation.

In other words Mr. Leslie McDowall, the Manchester City manager, had studied his players—their strengths and weaknesses—and then decided that with this style of play he would get the best out of them. That is just what every team should do.

The only thing I am prepared to dogmatise on is this. Every team without exception needs a good link up in midfield. They also need someone operating in this area to get the attacks started.

Remember it is the players who dictate the plan. Take each game on its merits. Study your opponents. Discover where they are strongest and strike where they are weakest.

I hope in this book I have forced home the chief point that football is a team game. Every player should try by all means in his power to be an absolute master of the ball. The sort of player who does not wildly kick the ball away when in possession ; the sort of player who is always trying to help his team mates out of trouble by running into position to take a quick pass. Remember: never stand still once you have parted with the ball.